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BOMBAY BRANCH

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NARRATIVE

OF A

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

TO

AFRICA AND ARABIA,

PERFORMED BY HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS

LEVEN AND BARRACOUTA,

FROM 1821 TO 1826,

UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPT. F. W. OWEN, R.N.

83877

BY

CAPT. THOMAS BOTELER, R.N.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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NARRATIVE

OF THE

VOYAGE OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP LEVEN, &c.

CHAPTER I.

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Our survey of the Leopard's Bank being completed on the morning of the 28th of November 1823, we weighed, and proceeded towards Mombas, passing on the way a small

river, called Kaleif, on the banks of which, at a short distance up, there was formerly a large Arab town, which, many years ago, after being repeatedly annoyed by its more powerful neighbours, was attacked, sacked, and burnt by the Gallah, when its unfortunate inhabitants were treated with great barbarity.

The whole of one day, while prosecuting our survey along the coast, the surface of the sea was covered by a small species of crab, living, but motionless, unless when disturbed. They were probably availing themselves of the strong current that ran along the shore to emigrate from one part of the coast to another. I mentioned the circumstance to some Arabs at Zanzibar, who assured me that it was a circumstance common at stated periods of the year.

On the 3rd of December we arrived at the celebrated port of Mombas, on the venerable old castle of which the red flag of the Arabs was flying. It was late when we anchored, and therefore no communication with the shore took place; but, in the morning, the nephew of the Shekh, or Sultan, came off with a retinue of twenty-six persons, and, in the name of his uncle and the people of Mombas, begged Cap-

tain Vidal to authorize them to hoist the English flag, and to place their town and territory in the hands of his Britannic Majesty. This offer required consideration, and it was agreed that the answer should be deferred until the next day, when, as Captain Vidal was indisposed, I was sent on shore to deliver it. On landing near the castle, I was completely hemmed in by a number of men and boys, who seemed determined to set no bounds to their curiosity. My sword, my hat, and every article of my apparel underwent as strict an examination as the short time I had to wait for the Shekh's nephew would admit of. He came down with several more Arabs to escort me to the castle, the pathway passing, by means of a log of wood, over a deep and apparently natural fissure in the ground to the moat, over which, opposite to the entrance of the fortress, I crossed on a mass of rock that had either always remained unhewn, or been elevated for the purpose. Here I was required to stop, until the Shekh and his divan should be ready to receive me, and Arab dilatoriness allowed me abundance of time to look around.

A massive portion of rock, elevated some

feet above that which forms, with the exception of a superficial layer of earth, the surface of the island, served as a most excellent foundation for the respectable castle which the Portuguese erected to defend it. It is hewn down below the level of the circumjacent rock, so as to form a deep and broad moat, while the masonry above rises as a continuation of the hewn part below, from which, until you come very near, it cannot be distinguished. The whole exhibits the firm unity of artificial strength with that which Nature has given. The entrance, of a later erection than the rest of the building, has rather a grand and imposing effect: it stands out a little prominent, is much adorned by sculptured stone-work in high relief; and above its large folding-door, studded with iron spikes projecting from pieces of hard wood shaped like the umbo of a shield, a large tablet bears an inscription in old Portuguese, the characters of which are almost obliterated by time, and mouldering fast into decay. It records the rebuilding of this gateway in 1635, by Captain Francisco de Sexas de Cabra, and enumerates the services rendered to the King of Portugal on the East Coast of Africa by that

officer, and the rewards bestowed upon him by his sovereign.

The castle is of quadrangular form; and, notwithstanding its great size and dilapidated state, could with little expense be rendered impregnable, especially those parts which the Arabs have allowed to remain untouched: for, so wretched is their masonry, that the application of it, in the way of repair, to the solid Portuguese erections, in most cases does more harm than good; as the narrow rents that time has made in them are far less weak than the wide spaces which the Arabs open to apply their repairs. The description of the interior of Lamo Castle will suffice for that of Mombas, excepting that in the latter the eye may always find relief from the contemplation of Arab weakness by the vicinity of some massive relic of the old Portuguese, which proudly stands exposed to view, and disgraces by the comparison the wretched assemblage of mean hovels that surround it. Through these, after passing the large vaulted entry and Arab guard, I was conducted to a building, which appeared to have been originally occupied by the main guard; though now, reduced in height and sur-

mounted by an Arab roof, it served as a council-chamber. The Arabs sat on large stone benches projecting from the walls; while, as a mark of attention, two old-fashioned three-cornered chairs were brought in for the accommodation of the purser and myself.

The appearance of the hovels around, the ragged set that curiosity had collected at the window, and the picture of wretchedness and poverty which they exhibited to the eye of a stranger, could not fail, though I well knew that the ostentation of the Arab is chiefly confined to the decoration of his arms, to excite my surprise. Are these, thought I, the descendants of the men who opposed the Portuguese in the plenitude of their power, and wrested their native territory from their grasp; who in later times have so long coped successfully with the whole force that the Imaun could bring against them; and who, when wearied out at last, and their small community overcome by numbers, choose, rather than submit to an arrogant foe, to cast themselves on the protection of a people of a faith so contrary to their own! I could not but entertain towards them a very different feeling from that which I did for other Arabs; dressed like these, equally

dilatory in their general conduct, living in the same way, professing the same religion, and following the same customs; still, in the hour of danger they have risen pre-eminent. Assisted by the Soallese, who form the largest portion of the population, and whose chief is high in command, they have ever striven, and generally with success, to maintain their rights. Even now, when reduced in power, and stripped in great part of their possessions by the Imaun, the people of Mombas are regarded with fear and respect by the whole line of coast. It was with no slight degree of interest that we first approached it; the rocky insulated site of its venerable castle, the surrounding fertile country, and the lofty hills at the back, all tended to increase the feeling. With the latter, in particular, we associated the idea of liberty; for in such spots her throne has ever been reared. But I must resume my narrative.

Soon after we arrived, the Shekh entered, followed by a venerable fine-looking man, who sat down with him on the elevated seat, with a long slight spear in his hand. The Shekh was aged, tall, emaciated, and decrepid, and in his countenance, although the effects of Time appeared to have been heightened by those of

care and anxiety, still there remained a mild and pleasing expression, although not totally unaccompanied by an unsettled, hesitating manner — the general attendant on declining years. No particulars were entered into; they seemed very anxious that Captain Vidal himself should come on shore, and they were evidently embarrassed by the circumstance that the place of meeting was too public for the nature of their communication.

Previously to their adjourning to a more private one, it was necessary to await the arrival of the Soallese chief, without whose sanction nothing could be finally adjusted. He presently entered, received and returned the salutes of the assembly in a most graceful manner, and then took his seat by me, having first saluted me with a hearty shake of the hand, and welcomed me in broken Portuguese to Mombas. The appearance of this chief, who was the hereditary Prince of Melinda, was striking: his countenance was strongly expressive of activity, penetration, and a vivacity which even sixty years could not entirely repress, though they served in a slight degree to temper it; and his silver-white moustaches presented a strong con-

trast to the darkness of his features, in which respect they differed but little from those of the Negro.

He was of short stature, slight, and well-made, wore a large turban, and was clad in a green garment, the only one of the kind I have seen worn, except by the Governor of Zanzibar. The assembly broke up, and I was motioned to accompany the Shekh and a select few of his principal people to a small room on the rampart. After we had entered it, the door was carefully closed, and the subject of placing Mombas under the protection of the English was entered on. The discussion was opened by the Shekh, the old Soallese chief, and two or three more. In an impressive manner they dwelt on the reiterated efforts of the Mombassians to maintain their small territory against foreign subjugation; on the feeling of liberty which their success in those attempts had grafted in their minds; and on the heart-rending idea that this was now about to be outraged, that their struggles must prove unavailing, their privileges be trampled upon, and their lives probably be sacrificed to the resentment of the Imaun of Muscat, as a punishment for their patriotism in defending

their native possessions from his grasp. Not a post had he gained that had not been manfully defended; but now, oppressed by numbers, their resources cut off, and resistance no longer of any avail, they had unanimously come to the determination of delivering up their country to the English, instead of tarrying until it was forcibly wrested from them by the Imaun: for, although the former differed so widely from them in religion and manners, still, under the government of so free and commercial a country, they felt assured that Mombas must flourish. On the contrary, under the rule of the Imaun it would quickly fall into decay; for, independently of the severity of the first measures that would be adopted against them, they had to dread a constant system of studied insult and oppression, as totally destructive to energy as creative of idleness and sloth. The measure of delivering up the place to the English had long been contemplated, and, when agreed to unanimously, notice to that effect was transmitted in the last monsoon to Bombay, but no answer had been received. The other monsoon had set in, and the Imaun's forces were daily expected. In this emergency, they hailed our arrival as

their last resource, and hoped, under our sanction, to hoist the English ensign; "for," resumed the old Shekh, while producing one which they had made for the purpose, "even allowing that this is not seconded by an armed force, still under it we may defy the Imaun's power." He concluded by requesting, in the name of himself and of the people of Mombas, that I would hoist on their castle the British flag. Agreeably to the instructions which I had received from Captain Vidal, I objected in his name to comply with this solicitation; offering, however, to take charge of, and to forward by the first opportunity, any letters to that effect which they might wish to send either to the Cape, Bombay, the Isle of France, or to Commodore Nourse.

So many were the arguments they used, and so urgent were they in their importunities that I would grant their request, that at last I almost thought they would make me hoist the English flag, whether I would or not: however, finding that I was positive in refusing to accede to their wishes, they altered their tone, and begged that, if the captain could possibly leave his bed, he would pay them a visit. He did so; but the result, as may be supposed, was the

same. The conference being over, Captain Vidal and I were invited by the Shekh's nephew to his dwelling, to partake of a repast prepared in the true Arab style. A large round wooden tray was placed on the table; it was set out with upwards of a dozen saucers, surmounted by handsome covers, manufactured of straw dyed yellow, finely worked, and resembling pointed Chinese caps, with a ball on the top. These contained meat, fowls, and eggs, generally cut into small pieces, and prepared with sugar. There was likewise a large display of sweetmeats and rice cooked in a variety of ways, with, in general, a large mixture of cocoa-nut. These dishes were as remarkable for the excellence of their taste as for the extreme cleanliness with which they were prepared. Sherbet and cocoa-nut milk were the only beverage. As soon as Captain Vidal, the Shekh's nephew, the Soallese chief, and myself, had finished our repast, the remnants of the feast quickly vanished before the active fingers and voracious appetites of the surrounding Arabs, who, although of the first rank, did not disdain to scramble for the largest share and the choicest bits.

Often in fancy have I sketched to myself a perfect harbour in Mombas: I found this notion realized. It affords good riding-ground at the entrance, sheltered by an extensive reef on either side; a harbour within, where, from its vicinity to the coast, the sea-breeze tends to preserve the health of those vessels that resort thither; a steep rocky shore, in many places rendering wharfs unnecessary, and in others forming a shelving sandy strand, where vessels might be hauled up and careened, favoured by a rise of tide of two fathoms; and an island three miles long and two broad, with its cliff boundary capable of being rendered at a small expense almost impregnable; Nature having formed it like a huge castle surrounded by a moat, over which, at the back, there is but one ford, and that a very dangerous one, and passable only at low-water spring-tide. There are no swamps, no stagnant pools, no mud-banks, which might render it unhealthy; no neighbouring height that might be fortified by an enemy to command it; and, when assaulted, no want of patriotism for its defence.

With respect to its situation as a mercantile port, it would be presumption in me, who know

so little of it, to hazard opinions, which, combated by others, might only serve to expose my ignorance. I shall content myself with merely stating a few facts, leaving it to others to ascertain how far they are of importance, or can be taken advantage of in a mercantile sense. One of the first considerations in commerce is the various means of transport, and the knowledge of such of these as it will be most advantageous to adopt. With Mombas, the dullest sailers, assisted by a favourable monsoon, can have a safe and speedy communication: taking advantage of the end of one, they can return equally favoured by the commencement of the next, and so *vice versa;* besides being aided by the currents that in general set in the same direction as the wind. Should a vessel be delayed until the unfavourable monsoon has set in, still she may, by standing out to sea, escape the current and make good her voyage; and at times, even where the current sets in shore, she may, favoured by the land-wind, effect her purpose, although, generally speaking, it is a bad place, and sometimes (as was shown in the case of Commodore Blanket and his squadron) impracticable and dangerous.

English manufactures, brought out in large vessels, could be retailed from Mombas to the whole line of coast either way, by means of the Arab dows, the hire of which would be a mere trifle. The Imaun, it is true, might interfere, and prohibit the importation of such goods into the districts subject to his sovereignty; yet that is not likely to happen, provided that the duties which he should think proper to impose were duly paid. Occupied by the English, it would serve as an excellent half-way house to vessels bound through the Mozambique Channel, as a retreat from an enemy, and, in case of danger, as a port to refit at; besides affording a refuge to the crews of vessels that might unfortunately be cast away on the coast. At present, from the English name being but little known, and this part of the coast being rarely visited by ships of our nation, should the crew survive the loss of a vessel or the avaricious treachery of the natives, it is more than probable that they would fall victims to the climate long before a chance vessel should arrive and convey them away. The navigation of the Mozambique Channel would be rendered better known, and consequently the communi-

cation through that channel with the East Indies would be facilitated, as would also the opening of a trade with the west coast of Madagascar, on the part of the inhabitants of which but little stimulus to embark in commercial pursuits appears to be required, especially now that they are under the government of a prince of such extraordinary abilities.

It is likewise to be considered that, as the Portuguese have now lost the Brazils, they will in all probability again turn their attention to their hitherto so long neglected possessions on the east coast of Africa; in that case, the occupation of Mombas by the English must certainly be desirable. Independently of England supplying the coast through Mombas with various articles of manufacture hitherto furnished principally by other countries, this territory would likewise, by the culture of grain on its fertile soil, if not totally engross, at least gain a very respectable share in, the extensive coast commerce carried on in that article. As a military post it would by its resources tend greatly to check the slave-trade, which thereabout is still carried on by the Portuguese, French, and Arabs.

The sugar-cane appears to thrive well; vege-

tables are in great abundance, and nearly every sort of fruit peculiar to warm climates may be had at Mombas, growing as often spontaneously as by culture. The Wannēkahs, who inhabit the country for some miles inland, are not so blind to their interest, wild and savage as they are, as to neglect commerce; and through them the productions of the interior might be obtained for a very trifling return. The Arabs principally confine their traffic with them to ivory; but then they do not possess the means of the British merchants or their characteristic energy, and consequently do not hazard speculations, which, in the first place, might require much thought, foresight, and firmness, and, in the second, a capital to meet the loss in case of failure. They are content, generally speaking, to amble on in the humbler ways of commerce, without ever essaying to increase their profits by prompt exertion of mind or activity of body. Whatever may be gained without requiring them to deviate from their usual dilatory conduct they will greedily grasp at, but all else they appear to consider beyond their reach. Even the lowest among them have the same dislike to active exertion.

Should you hire one of these at daily pay to perform any work for you, in general he will, as soon as he has earned sufficient for the supply of his immediate necessities, leave you and indulge in idleness, until want obliges him to resume his work. This, I should imagine, would not be the case under a government like ours, where the property of the peasant is equally guaranteed by the laws with that of the rich and the powerful. Cowries are abundant, and the Arabs informed me that in some rivers in the vicinity gold in small quantities was at times procured.

Mombas appears anciently to have been a place of great consideration, yet but little mention is made of it in history. Vasco da Gama called there in his way to India; and the appearance of the houses, which were built of stone, with terraces and windows in the Spanish style, occasioned the pleasing sensation which those who, long separated from civilized society, experience when they re-enter it. They could almost imagine it was a Spanish port; and the feeling in its favour, which the first view had impressed on their minds, was heightened by the apparent kindness with which they were received. A boat came off, and

brought several of the principal men on board; and, after welcoming the strangers to their port, they promised everything in the way of supplies which the place afforded, yet with the suspicious salvo that it was necessary, according to the law of the place, that they should first enter the harbour. Da Gama did not like the terms; but he was overruled by the necessity of his situation, backed by the earnest entreaties of his men; and had nearly fallen a victim to the treachery of the Mombassians, who, frightened by a noise which they could not account for, betrayed their treacherous intentions by the fears they manifested on supposing their plot to be discovered. The Mombassians afterwards suffered severely for this intended act of hostility; for Francisco de Almeyda, after he had subdued Quiloa, attacked their capital, took it after a severe struggle, and, in revenge for the obstinacy with which the inhabitants had defended themselves, burnt the place. Though the town was destroyed, the inhabitants remained the same; and twenty-three years afterwards they had rendered their abode sufficiently strong to hold out some time against Nunho da Cunha,

who, after he had taken it, pursued the same course as Almeyda, and reduced it to a heap of ashes. After this time I have seen nothing respecting Mombas, but the scanty information which the inscription over the gate of its castle furnished, and a statement that in 1720 it was in the possession of the Imaun of Muscat. To this day the Mombassians draw the attention of the stranger with pride to a large mass of masonry, the common sepulchre for those who fell in wresting the place for the last time from the Portuguese.

The town of Mombas is divided into two parts; one inhabited by the Arabs, and the other by the Soallese. The former, during the time they expected to be attacked by the Imaun's forces, was enclosed by a wall about eight feet high, of weak construction, and having at various distances along it small look-out turrets. It was, in an assembled council of the Shekh and principal inhabitants, deemed requisite to be erected, and was raised by general effort in a very short space of time; each inhabitant of consequence being obliged to furnish a certain number of workmen, whom the Shekh was to pay. Excepting those houses erected on the ruins of the old Portuguese buildings, and some

few in imitation of those at Mozambique, the rest are in the same wretched state as those at Lamo and other Arab towns.

Thus much was seen of Mombas in the short time to which our stay was limited. An Arab, especially one who has not made voyages to other countries, can scarcely imagine that any man at all elevated above the lowest class could so far demean himself as to go about without a sword by his side or a crees in his girdle. One of our midshipmen, named Fisher, was on shore unarmed. He was a young man possessing a great command of ready wit; and the accidental omission on his part, which appeared to excite so much attention, was happily turned in his favour by the complimentary reason which he assigned for it. Imitating the sign expressive of amity and friendship adopted by the Arabs, that of hooking the two little fingers together, he gave them to understand that such were the terms existing between the Mombassians and the English; and therefore he did not carry, while there, a weapon intended for his enemies alone. He could not have paid a handsomer compliment to a people who were so earnestly requesting the assistance of the nation to which he belonged.

Captain Vidal returned on board, amid the hearty greetings of the inhabitants, who now anxiously looked forward to the arrival of Captain Owen (having been apprized by us of his intended visit), as their last resource. On the morning of the 7th of December, we left Mombas roads, and continued to the southward in prosecution of our survey. We kept to the coast for that day, but on the next proceeded towards the Island of Pemba.

Two large schelingahs, which ever since the morning had carefully kept aloof, and were evidently suspicious of us, on our hoisting English colours, bore down about noon, and ventured to approach near enough to be hailed by the pilot. They were the Imaun's vessels; and, finding that we were friends, saluted us by discharging, as they passed, those pieces of ordnance which, had we not proved so well prepared, might have greeted us in a different way. For their size they were well armed, each vessel firing about five guns, two or three of which, from the loudness of the report, were evidently of large calibre. The prevalence of light airs, and the existence of a strong northerly current, delayed our arrival at Pemba until the evening of the 10th.

The Albatross was ordered by Captain Vidal to survey one part of the island, while we took the other; yet, from the short time we could allot to it, the examination was not so critical as the subject deserved; for few islands possess such harbours as Pemba does, and few are so little known in a hydrographical sense. Its extent from north to south is thirty miles, and from east to west ten; and it is situated about eighteen miles from the coast of the main, and twenty-five from Zanzibar. It is low, and of coral foundation, but covered by a soil so rich and fertile as to yield a most flourishing produce, especially in rice of the finest quality.

The capture of Pemba from the Mombassians was an important step towards the subjugation of that power by the Imaun's government. The little culture they had carried on in their own beautiful and fertile island, and on the main land in the neighbourhood, together with the grain procured from the Wannekahs, had by no means been adequate to the supply of their town with the necessaries of life; consequently they became almost exclusively dependent on the Island of Pemba, to which few are superior for fertility of soil, variety of produce, means for

shipping it, and beauty of scenery. The struggle was long and obstinate before the Imaun finally subdued the island. The Prince Mombarrouk was entrusted with its defence; and although he could not succeed against the great superiority of force that was brought against him, yet he did sufficient to prove himself a good soldier, and one whose undaunted courage and perseverance entitled him to a better fate. Whatever chagrin he might have felt at his discomfiture, still that feeling must at least have been much alleviated by the knowledge of the high estimation in which he was held by his countrymen. The children are taught to lisp his name; and the wars of Mombarrouk form the subject of many a favourite song, not only among the Mombassians, but in the inland towns of the Wannekahs.

No soundings can be obtained between Pemba and the main, or between it and Zanzibar; and in many places off the island, even close to the rocks, we could get no bottom. In attempting to do this, for the purpose of anchoring, on the evening of the 12th, we narrowly escaped getting on shore. The place we had entered was a complete labyrinth of coral rocks, often rising

abruptly from a depth of from seventeen to twenty-five fathoms, with eighty close to. Some were nearly a wash; and a huge one, over which the current bore us, was within a few inches of our keel: one man sounding on it in a little more than two fathoms water, while another, on the other side of the vessel, dropped his lead in seventeen fathoms.

The Albatross was sent to Zanzibar on the 14th; and next day we left Pemba, and stood over to the main, resuming the survey of it from the place where we had before left off. It was low, covered with trees and flourishing verdure, and in general bounded by a sandy shore, with now and then a small intervening cliff of coral. Parallel to it, at the distance of four or five miles, there was a line of sands and coral reefs, with deep water between, and inside and to seaward, in some instances, unfathomable close to, as we experienced when endeavouring to find an anchorage near one, on the night of the 19th.

Two days afterwards, we arrived off the small island at the entrance of the river Pungahney, and thence stood off, and directed our course over towards Zanzibar, which at times, when the weather was clear, we could plainly discern.

So little frequented is this part of the coast, that, since our quitting Mozambique, we saw no vessels but Arab dows and schelingahs, until the night we arrived off Zanzibar; when, about nine o'clock, through the darkness that prevailed, a large ship was suddenly descried close to, and bearing down upon us. We cleared for action; she checked her progress, and, by her manœuvres, appeared evidently irresolute whether to approach or not. We altered our course, stood towards her, and, on hailing, discovered that she was one of the Imaun's armed vessels, conveying troops to Zanzibar. Our Arab pilot, perceiving the preparations we were making, resumed his sword and crees, and appeared, from the activity and readiness he displayed in assisting, to be glad of an opportunity of showing us that a fight was as apropos to him as to any one on board. He was a man of pleasing manners and quiet respectable behaviour; and, as he piqued himself on the service he had seen, I have no doubt, had anything serious taken place, he would have acted well his part.

On the 24th we arrived and anchored off the capital town of Zanzibar, wherein resides the

governor, who, as we found, had taken great umbrage at one or two small flags placed by Lieutenant Owen on the trees of the uninhabited islands that formed the port, to serve as marks for the survey of it. It is nearly twice the size of Pemba, which in every other respect it strictly resembles. It belongs to the Imaun of Muscat, to whom it is a most valuable possession, more especially on account of the rich crops of grain and sugar which it produces.

The harbours are many and of the best kind, being easy of access and perfectly safe, both from the general mildness of the weather and their favourable conformation. The soundings extend from Zanzibar to the main. The town differs not from those of the Arabs in other places, and its castle resembles in solidity that of Lamo.

With a view to save time, while the Barracouta was employed in obtaining refreshments at Zanzibar and in surveying it, the schooner was despatched to the main opposite, to examine the line of reefs and sands which skirted it, while I was employed in surveying the coast in the brig's pinnace. This I did for eighty miles to the southward, commencing at

the river Pungahney. Excepting about that part, there was no high land near the sea; but now and then, in the distant inland view, curious insulated mounts afforded a remarkable contrast to the general flatness of the country: one of these was termed Washeen, and could be distinctly seen at times from the Island of Pemba. In every part but one, where the coast was of a putrid marshy nature, the shore was lined with Arab villages, always rendered conspicuous by the groves of lofty cocoa-nut trees in the midst of which they were built, and sometimes by the towering remains of an old Portuguese fabric. The inhabitants are subject to the Imaun's power, and, as we passed, never omitted to wave their flag as an invitation for us to land.

One day, at dinner-time, we anchored near a large dow, and soon afterwards, by using signs of amity, prevailed on two of her crew, who were bathing, to pay us a visit. On first entering they did not perceive that we were armed; but, when they did, their countenances exhibited the utmost consternation: however, as they had already partaken of some good cheer, the effect was momentary, and, after a plentiful repast of

fowl and rice,—for spirits and salt pork they would not touch,—we sent them back to their vessel, much gratified by their reception. The favourable report which they there made of the treatment they had received, soon procured us a visit from their old turbaned chief. He came in his canoe, bringing with him a present of fruit, for the smallness of which he apologised in a good-humoured way, principally by signs, and begged that it might merely be considered as an humble acknowledgment of his respect for a nation at amity with his sovereign. He could not be prevailed upon to take anything in exchange, and indeed required much pressing before he would join the young midshipmen and me at dinner; however, when he did, he did ample justice to everything before him, especially to the rice and some preserves that fortunately I had by me. The novelty and good fare appeared to have almost as much effect on him as if he had not merely confined himself to the eatables. He laughed away, and talked with as great volubility as if we understood every word he uttered, and, feeling himself happy and comfortable, smiled and cracked his jokes with great glee. The expression of

his countenance, and now and then a passing word, was all that we understood of them. Before quitting the boat, he examined with the utmost curiosity everything in her; but that which appeared most to engage his attention, was the brass gun, which he extolled highly, and wished to see discharged; but, as we were abreast of a village at the time, I was fearful lest it might alarm the inhabitants, and was therefore under the necessity of declining to gratify his curiosity.

While at Zanzibar, four of our men deserted, being led away by an American black, who was one of the number. It is always best to part with those who are discontented with their vessel, when it can be done; but desertion is sure to create a bad feeling among the rest, which it requires some time and management to allay. We had experienced this at St. Mary's, Madagascar, but hoped, from the general content which appeared to prevail, that a like circumstance would not occur. Two were retaken; the third perished by the fever; and the last account we received of the fourth was, that he was confined in the castle-prison, where most likely he died. Experience has shown

how inimical the climate of Zanzibar is to Europeans: the Andromache lost several of her crew, who, when she was there about a year before us, had been, while watering, in a slight degree exposed to its effects. In the second visit of that ship to Zanzibar, in August 1824, Commodore Nourse, with a party of his officers, was so imprudent as to accept an invitation from the governor to visit him at his house in the country, and to pass a night there. The consequence was, that he was seized with the fever some weeks afterwards, and died, together with the greater number of those who had accompanied him. In the Barracouta we did not fare much better: the two deserters who were retaken suffered many weeks under the effects of the fever which they had caught by their imprudence.

One of the Negroes whom we picked up in the Seychelles canoe, strayed away for two nights, returned with the fever, and soon afterwards died; but the fate of a boat's crew, who, from unavoidable circumstances, were unable to return to the brig at night, was particularly melancholy. Four out of the five, of whom it consisted, instead of keeping by the boat, landed,

and slept around a large fire, which they kindled among the jungle. For upwards of a fortnight no bad effects resulted; but, at the end of that time, the fever attacked all but one, who some years before had been for a long time a slave on the island. Three died, after a painful illness; and the fourth, constantly ailing, finally invalided home, with an emaciated body and worn-down constitution. Thus did three men lose their lives by an act which they well knew at the time to be highly imprudent. Our boats had remained away at night, when circumstances compelled them; and in my visit to the main I was absent seven nights, and yet, though rainy weather prevailed, not one suffered.

Confined as we were to our small community, and engrossed by the particular nature of our employment, which required us constantly to act in concert, our Christmas dinner partook more of the character of a family meeting, than that of a mere assemblage of officers to celebrate a day to which so many pleasing associations of our early youth are attached. In the latter case, each would have his thoughts diverted to other times; but with us they dwelt partly on the present. We looked

around; saw the full extent of our society, and the unity of effort that prevailed taught us to prize those who composed it.

Captain Vidal and the officers dined together, and the merry notes of the fife were not lost on the crew. On the 4th of January 1824, we left Zanzibar for the purpose of surveying and ascertaining the exact position of Latham's Island, or, as it is erroneously termed, Shoal. Although we were passing it at a very short distance, yet it was by the merest chance that we discovered it, so limited is its size, and so trifling its elevation above the surface of the water. We anchored near it, soon after the evening closed. Latham's Island is situated in latitude 6° 54′ 2″, and longitude 39° 55′ 5″. It consists of coral, is of oval form, and about one thousand feet long: it rises not more than about ten or twelve feet above the level of the water, and is accessible only on the south-west, where there is a small shelving space of coral sand.

The surface is as flat as a bowling-green, and is formed entirely of the dung of the numerous sea-fowls that resort thither. In some parts, this incrustation over the interstices of the coral below was not of sufficient stability to re-

sist the weight of a man, as two or three of our people in the course of their peregrinations experienced. The feathered inhabitants, unaccustomed to be disturbed, were perfectly devoid of fear, and, unless we touched them, appeared totally to disregard us: not an inch would they stir to avoid us, and the slightest interference on our part they would endeavour, as far as lay in their power, to repel by the beak. Some few of them were of the sooty peterel kind, but by far the greater number resembled the gannet, and in point of size were little inferior to the goose.

It was a strange sight that met our view on our first landing. The steep rocky wall that bounded the surface of the island was lined by a complete phalanx of these birds, exhibiting a most motley scene, from the variety of shades between the now white downy coat of the younger and the dark tawny complexion of the elder. They hailed our approach by a shrill scream, but stirred not. The old birds gazed steadily, while the younger part shot forth a lively expression from their bright gold eyes, deeply enshrouded in the white downy mass that enveloped their heads, from which their

sharp-pointed beaks alone projected. The surface of the island was literally covered with them: some of the hens were sitting on their eggs, others tenderly watching their young in their first sally from their nests, or their awkward efforts to use their wings; while the remainder, in large flights, alternately relieved one another in scouring the surface of the surrounding sea for fish, with which they returned in great numbers. Such of these fish as we took from them, together with a proportion of eggs, afforded the boat's crew and myself a very hearty repast. One of the victims was a flying fish, upwards of eleven inches in length.

The bank of soundings, on which the island is situate, is very extensive to the northward, but approaches close to it in the opposite direction. Small vessels may traverse every part in perfect safety; but those of a large draught should be careful how they approach on the north-east, where there are spots, a cable-length from the island, with only three fathoms on them. The making of this island at night would be dangerous; and, from its slight elevation above the surface of the water, it could not be distinguished until close to it. Yet that de-

fect might be easily remedied by planting it with trees, which in all probability would thrive well, as the soil, produced by the dung of the fowl and the decomposition of the coral, appears to be rich. We left a lofty pole standing, with the date and the name of the brig upon it, and then made sail for Zanzibar, where we arrived on the evening of the 6th of January 1824.

I was immediately despatched to wait on the governor, and apply for the two deserters before mentioned, whom during our absence he had arrested. I found him in his balcony, lounging on a cane-bottomed sofa, from which, on my entering, he immediately rose, and accompanied me to the castle-prison, in which the two culprits were lodged. The straggling-money paid for them he accepted with apparent pleasure, as he delivered them up to me, and mechanically accompanied me in counting the dollars as I placed them in his hands. The force of custom, I suppose, swayed him on this occasion. No particular sum was offered; he knew not how much he was to receive, therefore could not dispute the amount. The Arabs, who were despatched to arrest our men, dreaded the effects of the resistance which they well knew they

should have to encounter, and therefore had recourse to their characteristic cunning to overcome the difficulty. The successful expedient to which they resorted was rather degrading to us, inasmuch as it conveyed a censure which, severe as it was, yet was proved by the result to be just. Spirits were placed in the way; our men drank, and shortly afterwards were apprehended and carried away to the prison in a helpless state of intoxication, from which good care was taken that they should not recover.

Among the islands forming the harbour, there is a large dry sand-bank, that some years back was surmounted by coral, and so thickly wooded as to be designated by the name of Tree Island. The decomposing effects of time, together with the efforts of the sea, reduced it in a few years to the state in which it now is. It was on another sand-bank, resembling this, that, during our survey of the harbour, we struck; but, as the brig was in the act of tacking at the time, and the water perfectly smooth, she neither remained fast, nor received any damage whatever, although the bottom was composed of large sharp-pointed rocks, rising abruptly from a depth of ten and seventeen fathoms.

In no place were we furnished with refreshments so cheap, and of such excellent quality, as at Zanzibar. Our decks, every morning, while at anchor off the town, exhibited the appearance of a market, where, for a dollar upwards, two dozen fowls could be procured, sugar of excellent quality at twopence per pound, rice of a superior sort at a penny, and a great variety of fruit in proportion. Bullocks were obtained at from five to eight dollars a head: they were of middling size and of the humped breed. The sheep, of the Angola kind, were likewise very cheap.

On the 8th we quitted Zanzibar, and, in company with the Albatross, stood over towards the main.

CHAPTER II.

The Barracouta strikes on a Coral Reef, but gets off again without damage.—Monfia Island.—Arrival at Quiloa.—Historical Particulars of that Place.—Visit to the River Lindy.—Pombe Basin.—Quindamas Bay.—Querimba Islands.—Arrival at Oibo.—Description of the Island.—Malegasch Invasion.—Portuguese Colonists of the present day on the East Coast.—Extraordinary Mountains at the back of Almeyda.—Rejoin the Leven off Pinda Reef.—Her Operations since we parted.—A Fish of the Bonito species springs on board.—Arrival at Mozambique.—The Barracouta parts company with the Leven, and arrives off Quilimane.—Melancholy Termination of the Senna Expedition.—Imminent Danger of the Boat in passing the Bar.

AFTER a few hours' run from Zanzibar, we arrived, in the afternoon of the 8th, on the coast of the main, and came to an anchor near one of the sandbanks, which, at a short distance, form a line parallel to it, as before mentioned. Next day we continued our course to the southward, and had not proceeded far when we suddenly struck, without any previous indi-

cation of our danger, on a steep ledge of coral rocks. The water being fortunately smooth, we received no apparent damage, and in a short time were enabled, by the assistance of the schooner, to extricate ourselves from our disagreeable situation.

Often, during our employment on the coast, we had occasion to observe how unconscious of danger (I can scarcely term it tame) the sea-fowl, of one species in particular, and that the most common, appeared to be. In size they were little inferior to the common gull, and they belonged to the family of the brown and white peterel. They frequently flew around us in great numbers; and, when food was thrown overboard to them, they would gradually approach the person who supplied it, and at last hover so near as almost to take the proffered morsel from his hands. We were obtaining soundings, and twice within a short space of time the same bird alighted and rested on the head of the man who was attending the line: in the third attempt it was caught.

On the 10th we anchored near Monfia, and commenced the survey of that and the neighbouring islets, together with the labyrinth of

shoals situate to the northward and southward, and between that and the main. Monfia is low, and of the usual coral and sand foundation, rising abruptly on the seaward side from an unfathomable depth. Though this circumstance does not render the island itself dangerous, yet it causes the approach to the outermost shoals to be particularly perilous, especially during a calm; when, from the prevalence of a strong current, which sets to the northward at the rate of two miles an hour, a vessel without good means of assisting herself might be driven on them and wrecked. Monfia is situated nine miles from the main, which there assumes a more hilly appearance. It is not, as represented in the chart, nearly circular, but of a long narrow form; it is covered with trees, and inhabited.

The survey of this island and its dangers occupied one week, at the end of which we were again on the main, and, as we thought, from certain appearances in the land exactly tallying with a description given in a French manuscript, close to the port of Quiloa, although the latitude did not agree with that assigned. To clear up our doubts, we despatched a boat to a dow

that was at anchor near us, which shortly returned with an Arab and his attendant, who volunteered to pilot us into Quiloa, which he assured us was at the extremity of a deep bay near us. It took us the whole day to beat into this place; and, after all the delay thus occasioned, we had the mortification to learn that there were two Quiloas, and this the wrong one, being nothing more than a small village. We supposed, at the time, that the whole business was a piece of Arab finesse to obtain pilotage, and therefore, considering ourselves imposed upon, were not solicitous of the farther company of those who had cheated us. The two dows, after we had anchored, made fast to our stern, and it was only by casting off the rope which attached them that we at last succeeded in getting rid of our importunate visiters. The effect of the means we adopted was as instantaneous as it was laughable: the Arabs suspected treachery; the alarm was given; and, their white mantles waving in the wind, they vaulted with surprising agility, one after the other, over the stern, and swam to their vessel.

On the 20th we anchored at Quiloa, pro-

nounced by the natives Keelwah. When the Portuguese first arrived on the coast, this port appears to have been one of the most considerable of the Arab possessions, and held sovereignty over Sofala, Mozambique, and the intervening ports.* In 1505, Francisco de Almeyda appeared before the city with a large force, picked a quarrel with its sovereign, and, landing during the night seven hundred of his men, captured it after a most desperate resistance, which induced him to burn the place. A fort was afterwards erected by the Portuguese, but the climate proved so unhealthy, that they were eventually obliged to quit it. Brief, however, as was the duration of their contaminating presence, it was amply sufficient to blast the prosperity of Quiloa. A village, scarcely visited or known, now occupies its site; and the wretched hovels of the Arabs of the present day are mingled among the ruins of the once respectable and opulent city. It is really melancholy to witness the devastations which the avarice of man has occasioned on the east coast of Africa. Wherever we went, often even in the most obscure harbours, we could trace the remains of

* See Ogilby's Africa.

former wealth and civilization contrasted with present poverty and barbarism. We may admire the courage and perseverance of the old Portuguese, but must ever deprecate the avaricious incentive which had no bounds, and reduced a thriving populous country to a wilderness. So low had Quiloa fallen, that even the Imauns of Muscat, who appear to have been ever greedy of dominion over those of their faith on the coast, heeded not that place, until it was brought into notice by the French, who commenced a trade there, some forty years back, for slaves. Since that time it has been in the possession of the Muscat government.

Part of the walls of the city still remain in a tolerably perfect state, as also the massive relics of one or two of the houses, which in old books are described as being built in the Spanish fashion, with lofty rooms and painted ceilings. The fort erected by the Portuguese still exists, and is garrisoned by the Arabs. It is a substantial stone building, of a square form, with a tower at each corner, and spacious enough to contain a respectable garrison. It has a remarkable appearance in many points of view, not so much on account of its own venerable aspect,

as from its situation on the verge of the unruffled waters, rising from amid a grove of lofty trees, and towering above the mean habitations of the Arabs around, and the ruinous remnants of former splendour in the vicinity.

The port of Quiloa, when you are once inside it, is one of the finest on the coast, but it has no anchorage in the approach, the depth close to it being unfathomable. In the narrow channels that communicate with it on either side of the island, the anchorage is scarcely better, the nature of the bottom rendering chain-cables almost indispensable; while, at the same time, from the great depth that prevails, they must necessarily be highly inconvenient, especially to vessels weakly manned. The lagoons run some miles back, and in most parts have sufficient water for the largest vessels. The channel which connects them, and which forms Quiloa Island, where the town is built, is sufficiently deep for dows to pass through, although it would be too shallow for vessels of a larger kind.

The island, of coral formation, is low and swampy, and about five miles in length by three and three-quarters in breadth. It is co-

vered with trees, and there is every probability that it would yield, if properly cultivated, a rich return; yet I doubt much if ever it would be rendered healthy. The banks of the lagoons certainly never could; for in no places that we ever visited had we witnessed a more stagnant swampy appearance in the land, combined with putrescent effluvia equally disagreeable to the organs of smell. A little way up the lagoons hippopotami abound; and, in the extensive forests that crown the surface of the main, leopards are numerous, and extremely daring and ferocious in their attacks on the inhabitants of the villages.

Although Captain Vidal was furnished with an introductory letter from the governor of Zanzibar to the commandant of Quiloa, yet the latter always appeared to be afraid of us. Lieutenant Owen landed near the fort one night for the purpose of obtaining the latitude by the stars; an alarm was instantly given, and the old governor was soon observed hurrying half dressed to the spot, at the head of a dozen or two of Arabs, armed with creeses, swords, and matchlocks, who drew up at a short dis-

tance in a line, and there patiently awaited the departure of the boats.

As the thriving slave-trade with the French was the sole inducement to the Imaun to seize Quiloa, it is probable, now that he has prohibited that commerce under the penalty of death, he will withdraw the garrison. Quiloa will then in all likelihood cease to be inhabited; for the governor assured me that the insalubrity of the place had increased so much of late years, that when the Arabs should depart, and consequently commerce in a great measure with them, the natives of the country would not find it worth their while to risk their lives by remaining on the island, where, comparatively speaking, so little was to be gained; for even the old traders, the French, are not likely to be again so constant in their visits as they formerly were.

We left the port on the 30th of January, and prosecuted our survey to the southward. Next day, we entered the deep bay into which the river Lindy empties itself; and it was not until we had nearly reached its extremity that we obtained soundings, which quickly shoaled

from twenty-five fathoms to five, where we anchored. I was deputed to wait on the Muscat governor of the principal town, situated on the northern point of the river, to request permission to survey the place, and his assistance in obtaining refreshments for our crew. On landing, I was received by several Arabs, armed with swords, creeses, and matchlocks, and a great number of the natives carrying assagays, bows and arrows, &c.; a sort of precautionary measure that would equally serve as a mark of respect, or, in case of necessity, for annoyance or defence. I accompanied them to the governor, whom I found seated on a bench, at the gate of the small whitewashed fort, of Arab construction. He rose, and received me with many expressions of friendship towards the English; and requested me to inform Captain Vidal that he was at liberty to survey the place, and likewise that such refreshments as could be procured for the brig should be furnished as speedily as possible. While I was conversing, and taking some cocoa-nut milk with him, the schooner entered the river, and answered with three guns the like number fired by the Barracouta, to obtain a base by sound. This

was considered by the Arabs as a salute; and the governor, apparently highly gratified by it, as soon as the first gun was discharged, shuffled hastily into the fort and returned the compliment.

The situation of the town is low, and during the rainy season in all probability swampy and unhealthy; yet, as the straggling huts that compose it are interspersed with groves of cocoa-nut and other trees, the whole assumes in the approach a pleasing appearance, which is heightened by the bright whiteness of the lofty round tower which surmounts the fort, and at times breaks upon the view from amid the thick foliage of the trees. The huts were mostly of circular form, and in capaciousness and neatness of construction far surpassed those at Quiloa.

We endeavoured at first to complete our water from the muddy wells of the town, but the access to them proved so difficult, and the quality of the supply so bad, that with pleasure we availed ourselves of the knowledge of one of the natives, who for a slight reward conducted us to a better place. The access to the latter was by a winding creek, barred at low-

water, and leading through mangrove-trees to a gentle declivity, at the foot of a huge rocky precipice, from the side of which issued a small spring of water. Cool, and as clear as crystal, it dropped into a rocky basin below, irrigating by the overflow the gentle declivity beneath. The entwining branches of the trees on its margin formed a complete bower over the basin, and the precipice rose towering above. The tracks of the different wild animals which resorted to the fountain were apparent in the vicinity, and among them those of the hog and the buck were the most common. A French slaver had left her name carved in the bark of a large tree near the basin; and above, on the same tree, was erected a sort of stand, apparently for the purpose of watching and shooting from it animals which resorted thither.

One of the watering party, who was deputed to cook dinner for the rest, was busily employed in his avocation, when suddenly, on looking up, he perceived that he was surrounded by a number of the natives, armed with assagays and bows and arrows. Forsaking his charge, under the impulse of fear, he bolted into the thickets; and, making a most precipi-

tate retreat to his comrades, his mind impressed at the moment with the Delagoa affair, he shouted "The Oratontahs! The Oratontahs are coming! To arms! to arms!" The natives soon approached, and by their friendly manner quickly lulled suspicion. They appeared to be a very tractable and well-disposed people.

One of the black men who were picked up in the canoe off Patta, and another, who escaped the fever, as already mentioned in the melancholy account of the crew of a boat who for one night only remained on shore at Zanzibar, deserted while employed on the watering party. They were observed some time before purchasing bows and arrows; but, as it was supposed that they were for the officers, no suspicion was excited. The fairy dreams which these poor fellows might have indulged respecting their new life of independence, in all probability soon vanished.

We followed the schooner into the river a short time after she anchored. The entrance is eight miles across, and the depth inside considerable, although on the bar it does not exceed three fathoms at low water. At the dis-

tance of eight miles up, the river branches off into several inconsiderable channels, forming a complete archipelago of low swampy islets, covered with mangroves. The land on either side rises into lofty hills, covered with verdure; two of which, of a conical form, render the port easy to be recognised at a great distance.

On the 4th of February, we left the Lindy, and about noon were off the river Mongalo, to which the schooner was despatched, while we proceeded to Quindamas Bay, where for some time we almost despaired of finding an anchorage. At length, however, we succeeded, but found ourselves in a rather critical situation; heavy breakers were close on one side, and an unfathomable depth on the other: yet even this situation was preferable to remaining under weigh during the night, in a place where neither the lead nor the eye was of service to indicate danger; for the reefs in many places extended to a great distance from the shore, and at high-water the sea did not break on them. In the depth of the bay were two openings, one a small river, and the other an extensive basin, about seven miles in circumference, with a deep but very narrow and winding channel leading

into it through the reef. The entrance was scarcely a cable's length across, and was formed by two rocky points, projecting from the range of lofty hills that rose abruptly from the shores within. It was inhabited by Arabs, probably under the Imaun of Muscat. These, as in the course of the survey of the bay I sailed past their three neat and extensive villages, came down in crowds to the shore, waving white flags and beckoning us to land, which, had our time permitted, I should most gladly have done; for, independently of procuring refreshments, I should have had an opportunity of examining a fine castellated building of the old Portuguese, apparently in excellent condition. It was situated on the side of a steep hill, about half-way up; and, although the trees which surrounded it were of lofty kinds, they fall short of the height of the building, which, from the neat whitewashed state in which it was kept, was most likely garrisoned.

On the morning of the 5th of February we weighed, and in so doing narrowly escaped grounding on the reef, whose sharp-pointed rocks were close under our lee by the time we got under weigh; had we touched, the loss of the

vessel would have been inevitable. The coast, as we proceeded to the southward, was low and rocky, and the water unfathomable close to, so as to prevent us from anchoring at night; which, for the quicker and more correct performance of the survey, it was always necessary to do.

On the 7th, we passed Cape Delgado, which, by our observation, we made in latitude 10° 40′ 52″ south, and longitude 40° 32′ 15″ east. It is low and rocky, and differs only in its superior prominence from other points in the vicinity. Immediately to the southward of it commences the extensive line of the Querimba Islands, which extends in a southward direction. These islands are of various sizes, and of low coral formation, having in general long flat reefs, dry at low-water, extending from them to seaward, and then rising abruptly from an unfathomable depth. The harbours are of the finest kind, sheltered by the main land to the westward, and in every other direction by islands and reefs. They afford perfect security for vessels in the heaviest gales; yet little benefit is derived from their excellence in that respect, for they are visited only by the Arabs in their dows, except-

ing at the inconsiderable Portuguese port of Oibo, where now and then a French slaver skulks in, and, secure from detection, carries on her traffic with impunity, purchasing the slaves at one dollar a head;—a fact that I could not have believed, had I not found it confirmed by the bills of lading of a French slaver which we fell in with on the east coast of Madagascar and destroyed.

In the whole line of coast skirted by the Querimba Islands, there are only two rivers, which are both inconsiderable. One, to the southward, has five and six fathoms at its entrance, and branches off into two small streams, known by the names of the Simma and Masimma. On the steep point which divides them is a small Arab village, the most southerly that I have seen or heard of, above the houses of which the huge remnant of an old Portuguese building rises conspicuously. The other river is in the depth of Oibo harbour, and so small and shallow as scarcely to be worthy of notice. The land of the main is thickly wooded, generally low, often swampy; and, with the exception of the town of Oibo and the Arab village noticed above, we saw no appearance of inhabitants, although the ruins of the factory houses of the

old Portuguese were observed in many places, more especially in the larger islands.

Our trigonometrical survey of the Querimbas was conducted with the greatest care, and founded on a series of bases measured by sound. The Barracouta kept outside the islands, and ascertained their extent; the schooner examined those inside, and obtained the depth of the channels between; while I traced out the coast of the main in the pinnace, in deep water. Thus three useful lines were obtained, and the intermediate parts which required examination were filled up from time to time by united efforts. For upwards of a fortnight, while employed in the pinnace, we slept only two nights on board the brig. We had much rain, accompanied by heavy thunder and lightning; but, whenever there was the least intimation of its approach, the boat was brought to an anchor and completely housed in by the tilt and sails, so that not a drop of wet could enter. At night a large fire was kept up by the sentry, which, though it might smoke us a little, yet in all probability conduced to the health of all; for, notwithstanding the exposure to which we were subjected, and especially the heat of the sun, not one of the crew suffered from illness.

In the afternoon of the 18th, I arrived off the island of Oibo, where I was soon joined by the schooner and one of our boats. The Barracouta had anchored on the steep ascent of a reef outside. A squall came on, and she drifted off with sixty fathoms of iron cable out. What with the desertions and deaths that had taken place, together with the absence of the two boats, she was left almost in an unmanned state; and the heaving up of the anchor to the bows, with its heavy weight of chain, was a task that demanded the united efforts of officers and men for upwards of three hours. We had seen her over-night; and, as we knew that Captain Vidal's prudence never slept, we felt no alarm at her absence in the morning, but attributing it to the right cause, commenced the survey of the harbour.

It is formed by the small islands of Oibo and Matema, having in the depth the main land as a boundary, and at the entrance two coral reefs, with deep channels between them and the island. There is likewise a channel of six fathoms between Matema and the main; but that formed by Oibo is scarcely navigable at low-water by canoes. The communication with the town is

by a creek, with a sufficient depth of water inside, but only one fathom and a half on the bar.

The town of Oibo is situated in latitude 12° 20′ south, and longitude 40° 30′ east. As it is the frontier post of the Portuguese towards the Arab country, whence alone a general attack on their decayed possessions in South-eastern Africa could at all be dreaded, so it is much more strongly fortified, and altogether kept in better condition, in a military point of view, than the generality of their towns. It contains one large fort, built in 1791; and two smaller, the older of which was erected by the first settlers, about three centuries ago. The garrison consists of two hundred soldiers, all either Creoles of the country or Blacks. The officers are of the former class, yet of so dark a hue that, had I not been informed to the contrary, I certainly should have considered two or three of them as belonging to the latter. The civil and portly old governor left his native city, Lisbon, in early life, and had resided thirty-six years in this country. He was the only one I heard of, who, during so long a residence, had never felt the pernicious effects of

the climate. His good fortune in that respect encouraged him to speak lightly of the foe. Thus, talking of the general salubrity of Oibo, he observed: "The period that is termed the sickly season here is that in which we have much rain, accompanied with thunder and lightning, commencing in the middle of January and ending about the same time in March; but it is a mere bugbear, and scarcely worthy of remark. Should the fever grow impertinent"—such was his term—"in its attacks, we use phlebotomy and the steam-bath, and it is soon overcome."*

The settlement of Oibo has been attacked three different times, during the last forty years, by the warlike natives of Madagascar, in all probability incited by the Arabs of Bembatooka, as they had their head-quarters in that port previously to embarking. Their last invasion took place in 1816; and, had not the elements conspired against them in their passage, and reduced the number of their canoes from two hundred and fifty to sixty-eight, Oibo, with its forts, would probably at this

* Experience, however, convinced him to the contrary: we were informed that he died of the fever soon afterwards.

time have added another link to the chain of ruins with which the Portuguese have lined the coast.

The enemy landed on the adjacent islands of Querimba; dispirited by their loss, they were easily routed by the force which the governor led over against them: twenty-five of their canoes were destroyed, the rest escaped to sea, but how it afterwards fared with them has never yet been ascertained. A Creole lieutenant of a troop, who had been an actor in the above affair, wound up his description of it, while assuming a laughing military air, by kicking from him, as he walked along, a bleached and mutilated human skull, and at the same time remarking, in an affected tone, that in 1816 it had sat on the shoulders of a Madagascar man.

The Portuguese colonists of this day, having continually before their eyes the decayed relics of their former power, seldom fail in the company of strangers to deplore its present decline. Were we to perceive in the man who thus pathetically pronounces its funeral oration any effort to revive the adventurous spirit of his ancestors, we might perhaps be inclined to

sympathise with him; but certainly not when we find that he merely laments the fact without thinking of a remedy, and, on the proposal of one, never fails to answer with a "*Non pode*" and a shrug of the shoulders. Whatever may be his wants, his indolence, generally speaking, is more than a match for any impulse to exertion that might tend to remove them. Surrounded by ignorant Creoles; served by a set of his fellow-beings, degraded from their rank in nature, and groaning under hopeless slavery; living in a habitation often scarcely superior to the surrounding hovels; suffering under the influence of a burning sun, and exposed to the effects of a soil charged with putrescency and disease, which not even garden culture has essayed to remove; he spins out his listless and weary term of existence, and dies in general at an early age.

If the theme of the power of their ancestors is dear to the Portuguese, how humiliating must they feel their present state to be, when the Arabs, who were the contempt of their forefathers, return the insult with interest on the present race! An instance of this kind I witnessed, in company with some more officers,

at the governor's house, which astonished me, especially when contrasted with the deference paid to his excellency by his Creole officers. These, on taking leave, always kept their faces turned towards him, and, retiring in that way, bowed themselves out of his presence. A venerable-looking Arab, master of a dow from Zanzibar, arrived with a letter from the governor of that island to the commandant of Oibo. Two or three of his men were with him, conversing among themselves. With a firm step, they entered the apartment, and, scarcely deigning to look at the governor, delivered the letter to him with the utmost *sang-froid;* and then, turning to us, advanced and paid us the most marked attention. The governor appeared nettled at their behaviour, and, when they had departed, vented his anger by holding up the letter superciliously between his forefinger and thumb, contracting his features into an expression of contempt, and muttering something between his teeth about brutes and Arabs.

The Querimba Islands do not appear to have been ever of much consequence. They were originally inhabited by the Arabs, to whose faith, Ogilby says, the Portuguese had so great

an antipathy, that, seizing on their possessions, they did not content themselves with merely robbing them, burning their houses and mosques, and carrying them away for slaves, but, with a sweeping rage sparing neither age nor sex, they destroyed all that remained.

For many years after this destruction, the Querimbas remained in an uninhabited state, until some Portuguese crossed over from the main and settled on them. The principal people erected substantial buildings of stone for themselves, wherever they resided with their families, dependents, and slaves; and these, being well armed, were more than a match for the hostile Negroes of the main, who at times ventured over to attack them. On examining the remains of these buildings, I generally found that the outer walls, either of the houses themselves, or the enclosed space in which they stood, were perforated with loopholes for musquetry, and the tops of some were fitted for ordnance. I sometimes discovered in the interior the ruins of a small chapel, in which it appears to have been customary in the Querimbas to have a Dominican priest from Goa to officiate.

At present, among so extensive a line of islands, only Oibo and Querimba are inhabited; the population of the former is less considerable than that of the latter. The commerce consists principally in slaves: these, the governor assured us, could not be otherwise exported than through Mozambique: however, we have since learned that this statement was false, as we then suspected, for in the town creek a large vessel of French build was hauled up, with her broadside stove in, and evidently fitted up for that kind of traffic. We made inquiries respecting her, but could only obtain ambiguous answers. She was afterwards captured by the Leven, as will be related in a subsequent chapter.

On the 23rd the Barracouta returned. After drifting from her anchorage on the 18th, she was driven a great distance to the southward by a current running at the rate of three miles an hour. The manœuvres of the dows, in availing themselves of an eddy current, which ran in shore, pointed out to Captain Vidal the only means by which he could return to Oibo.

We stopped three days longer at that island, and then bent our course towards Pombe Basin, where we arrived on the 1st of March. This

place, which is situated in latitude 12° 27′ 30″ south, and longitude 40° 25′ east, is one of the finest harbours on the coast. The entrance, between two rocky points, is but one mile and three quarters across; but the basin into which it opens is nine miles long and six broad, and has almost everywhere sufficient water for the largest ships. In the narrows the depth is too great for anchorage, except in cases of necessity, and outside it is unfathomable close to; which circumstance would be a great drawback to the excellence of the harbour, were it not for the extensive bank a little way out on the southern shore that affords good holding ground.

We quitted Pombe Basin on the 4th, and in the evening passed the river Laria, whose waters discolour the sea to the distance of some miles. It was with difficulty that we weathered the southern point, called Soreesa, on account of the strong flood that prevailed. The schooner was not so fortunate, and was obliged to anchor at its mouth. Immediately after passing Soreesa Point, we anchored, and in the morning discovered that we were off the shoals of Moncabala and Indujio, which, situated in the front of the Bay of Almeyda, form a safe and

commodious anchorage. Although we were furnished with an old rough plan of the place, yet there was no latitude and longitude affixed to identify its situation: we recognised it, however, by the mountains at the back. These, situated at some distance inland, presented a most extraordinary appearance, rising in stupendous detached peaks from the surface of the plain, and appearing, from their rugged and broken forms, as if thrown up by some violent convulsion of Nature. Many resembled a wedge, the steep ascent on one side ending in an abrupt precipice on the other. Some in shape approached the nine-pin, and the height afterwards of these was more than thrice their diameter. We estimated their altitudes to vary from one to three thousand feet.

Having trigonometrically surveyed Almeyda Bay, we continued to the southward; and on the 10th, just as we had completed our survey of the Pinda reef, we were agreeably surprised by the appearance of the Leven, having been apprehensive that she might have already reached Mozambique and be waiting for us. Since our parting, she had visited Bombay and Muscat, and made an unbroken survey of the

African coast from Cape Guardafui to Guieux Bay; also of that portion of the coast of Arabia situated between Muscat and Cape Morebat, a distance of nearly five hundred miles; and of part of the island of Socotora, situated off Cape Guardafui, at the entrance of the Red Sea.

Captain Owen had heard of the offer made by the people of Mombas to deliver that place to the English; and, considering that its acquisition would be a desirable object, he had made up his mind to take possession of it until the pleasure of his Majesty should be known. When at Muscat, he informed the Imaun of this determination; and he immediately issued orders for the return of the force that he had already despatched against it. This force was observed hovering about the port as the Leven approached: it consisted of schelingahs and large dows, which kept up a strict blockade, and at times threw their shot into the town. Their fire was returned by the Mombassians with interest from the castle and the small ruinous batteries that crowned the summits of the island cliffs. The largest portion of one of these crumbled to pieces, and fell to the ground, at the third discharge of the small honey-

combed gun which it contained. As the blockade became more strict and the invading force accumulated, the Mombassians at first had recourse to finesse, and hoisted the British flag on their castle; and then, roused to active energy by the failure of that stratagem and the imminence of the danger, they raised the wall round their town, as before related, and prepared for a firm resistance: yet they did not take down the colours, which were still flying on the castle when the Leven arrived. They were then struck, and shortly afterwards re-hoisted, under the sanction of Captain Owen, in the presence of the Shekh and the Chief of Mombas, and cheered by the numerous inhabitants, who, by this to them almost magical act, saw themselves at once rescued from the threatened vengeance of the Imaun of Muscat. The blockade ceased; some of the vessels entered the port as friends, and the whole soon bade adieu to the place. Provisional arrangements were made, among which the abolition of the slave-trade was a principal article. Lieut. Reitz, third lieutenant of the Leven, was appointed commandant, having under him Mr. Phillips, the interpreter, four seamen, a corpo-

ral of marines, and three privates. It was considered expedient that the Prince Mombarouk should, in the name of the people of Mombas, ratify at the Isle of France the deed of cession of their capital and territory to the English. Accordingly, he embarked on board the Leven, with a retinue of twenty-six persons, among whom many were of the first consideration in the place. The Leven afterwards called at Pemba and at Zanzibar. On meeting, we communicated, and then made sail in company for Mozambique.

During our cruise, we lost by fever five men; the Leven was still more unfortunate. Her gunner and carpenter had died, besides many of her crew; and she had one man drowned.

The fish of the bonito species, which, as it has been already stated, the Arabs salt, and with which they carry on a lucrative trade, possess most extraordinary muscular power, throwing themselves out of the water, probably when in pursuit of prey, to a distance scarcely credible. One of them, a day or two before we arrived at Mozambique, rose close under our lee-bow, passed over the vessel's side, and struck with such force against the poop, that,

had any one received the blow, in all probability it might have been attended with fatal consequences. The fish, at first stunned by the violence of the shock, fell harmless at the helmsman's feet; but, after it had recovered itself, its struggles were such that it became necessary to despatch it by repeated blows of an axe before it could be handled with safety. The greatest elevation to which it rose above the surface of the water was eighteen feet; and the length of the leap, had no opposition occurred, would have exceeded one hundred and eighty.

On the 11th of March, we anchored, in company with the Leven, at Mozambique, where we found the Albatross, which had parted with us before our arrival off the Pinda reef. During our stay at this port, we were constantly occupied in completing the charts of the extensive line of coast and of the various harbours which we had surveyed,—a task of so complicated a nature, that only few who have not been themselves engaged in a similar duty can form even a faint idea of the toil attending it.

At Mozambique, the governor kindly allowed us the use of two of his largest rooms for the

purpose of completing our charts; and, as they had begun to assume a finished form, he appeared, by his constant attendance, to take a great interest in them. A report of the melancholy termination of the Senna expedition reached us; but, as we could not trace it to an authentic source, we endeavoured to disbelieve it. Our charts finished, and the victualling of the vessels completed, we left Mozambique on the 4th of April 1824; the Leven for Delagoa and the Isle of France, and we for St. Augustine's bay, Madagascar; where the Albatross, after examining the Chesterfield Shoal, or rather Island, and Juan de Nova, was to join us, preparatory to our commencing in concert the survey of the west coast of Madagascar.

We beat up in company with the Leven until the 9th, when we parted from her and stood for the river Quilimane, off which we arrived on the 12th; taking warning, from our former experience of the danger of the roadstead, to anchor a long way out and in deep water. Our object was to inquire of the governor respecting the result of the Senna expedition, and I was deputed to wait on him. I left the Barracouta soon after she anchored, pass-

ed the bar in safety, and in the dusk of the evening arrived at the town of Quilimane, where, on landing, I was received by the master of the slaver with whom I had formerly made acquaintance, and by the governor's secretary, who, much to my chagrin, informed me that his excellency was at some distance in the country, that he was not expected to return for a week or two, and that an answer to the letter from Captain Vidal, of which I was the bearer, could not be received in less than three days. Unpleasant as was this disappointment, inasmuch as it tended to delay the prosecution of the service upon which we were ordered, yet it was nothing in comparison with the distressing intelligence which awaited me, that not one of the three officers who embarked in the Senna expedition was living. I well knew that Mr. Forbes had perished, but the fate of Lieut. Browne and Mr. Kilpatrick still remained uncertain. Respecting them our hopes on board had been buoyant; and as we approached the town, impressed with the same feeling, I anxiously scanned with the spy-glass the multitude who were assembled, hoping to recognise one or both those gentlemen among them, but to

no purpose: all, excepting the master of the slaver, were strangers; and, by the time I landed, I was fully prepared for the melancholy tidings. Not nine months back, on the very same spot where I now listened to the account of their sufferings and end, I landed them in health and high anticipation of the successful result of their arduous undertaking. How short was their career! A few days only sufficed to determine the fate of the first; ten weeks that of the second; and a gloomy, desponding period of a month or so longer was the portion of the third.

I repaired to the governor's house, which, soon afterwards, one of my boat's crew entered with a tall emaciated Black, in whose feverish countenance and worn-down form I could at first scarcely recognise the once robust Adonis, the servant of the late Mr. Forbes. The delight which the poor invalid felt when he saw me was expressed by a loud cry of exultation, accompanied by "Me no go die, Mr. Boteler! Now me look you again, me go me own ship. Doctor speak um me, and me no sick no longer!" A cordial shake of the hand seemed at once to astonish the slave-dealers who stood

by, and to draw from the sunken eye of the sick man an expression of gratitude and pleasure. Antonio, the other servant of the party, also made his appearance; and although his countenance showed that he too had suffered, yet it also betokened that he was rapidly regaining strength and able to shift for himself; while poor Adonis, on the contrary, could scarcely creep along.

These two men, after the death of Mr. Kilpatrick, experienced many difficulties and privations, which, in their sickly state, were severely felt. After the body of their last master was interred, an inventory of the effects of the three was taken by Donna Pascoa, in the presence of Antonio and Adonis, who kept back for themselves a small trunk, which Mr. Kilpatrick, a day or two before his death, had especially placed in their charge. It contained, among several trinkets and articles of small value, a large piece of gold in a native state, and about fifty Spanish dollars, which the Donna insisted ought to be delivered up to her, as a partial remuneration for the considerable expense she had incurred in supporting the party at her house, and in supplying them with

canoes. The two Blacks, however, considering the money as left to them for their support, when the stock of beads and other articles which they had for that purpose were expended, refused to deliver them up, and were in consequence ordered to quit the house immediately, which they did, but were obliged by necessity to remain upwards of a fortnight longer in the vicinity, dependent on the bounty of the Donna's slaves for food and lodging. During this period of privation and hardship, Antonio was tolerably well, but Adonis was suffering from dysentery, by which his severe attack of the jungle-fever was followed.

An opportunity to escape from so disagreeable a situation was anxiously awaited, and at last presented by a canoe belonging to Paulo Mariano, in which they embarked, and soon arrived at the house of that kind-hearted old man, who with great feeling inquired after their late masters. On being informed of their death, he expressed the most lively sorrow; and the respect which he entertained for their memory he evinced by the kindness and attention that he showed to their distressed servants. These, after they had been entertained one day

at his house, departed next morning with a present of a bag of rice; and four Negroes were appointed to show them the road and carry their baggage. Towards the close of the evening they reached the village of Mongalloos, where, on account of the increased illness of Adonis, they were detained fourteen days. As the case of this poor fellow began to assume a very serious aspect, Antonio deemed it expedient to call in the attendance of a Negro, whose skill in curing the fever was held in high repute. His method of treatment is thus described by Captain Vidal, in an account of the expedition which he drew up from the report of Adonis and Antonio.

"In this man's first visit to Adonis, he retired a little apart, and, describing some mystic figures on the earth, soon returned, with the assurance that he had discovered the precise nature of his complaint, and should be able to relieve him. He then stripped him, and began rubbing his stomach with oil of a particular kind. After this application had been continued for some time, Adonis vomited a quantity of human bones, which alarmed him very much. On inquiry, he was informed that the

fetiches (evil spirits) of the country conveyed them to the stomach during sleep, and in this way they were particularly mischievous to strangers. Adonis expressed a wish to keep them, for the purpose of showing them to his English friends; but this the diviner would not permit; and, after retiring a short distance and muttering some words, he dug a small hole, in which he placed the bones, and, tracing some figures around the spot, carefully covered them over, remarking that in proportion as they decayed his health would improve. He was rubbed with oil every day, after which the steam-bath was applied, and some liquid mixtures were administered."

At the termination of the fourteen days, the health of Adonis was sensibly improved. One dollar was paid as the doctor's fee, and another for the hire of his canoe, in which they immediately embarked, and continued their journey down the river. About the 2d of December they arrived at Quilimane; and, next morning, according to the Donna's injunction, waited on the judge, to whom they presented a copy of the inventory of their late masters' effects. At this interview, while the two Blacks were recounting

their mishaps, several masters of slave-vessels were present; and when the recital was finished, they were very importunate with the judge to sell them. This proposition was probably only made as a joke; but to the poor Blacks, who knew they were absolutely at the mercy of these strangers, it was no such thing, especially to Adonis, whose feelings, sharpened by disease, were not in a fit state to be tampered with. Our arrival saved his life, and in all probability that of Antonio too; for, although he had pretty well recovered from an attack of the fever, it can scarcely be doubted that a second, in his weakened state, would have carried him off, especially when the hardships and privations that must have followed the expenditure of his beads and dollars are considered.

The conduct of these two men to their officers from first to last, their kindness and attention to them when living, their decent care and respect for them when dead, and their steady zeal and fidelity afterwards, deserve the highest praise. How striking is the contrast of their humanity with the cold-hearted conduct of the Senna priest, who denied the remains of the unfortunate Mr. Browne the rites of Christian

burial, and left that sad duty to be performed by a poor but feeling Negro! Holier far the prayer which he muttered than all the masses of that mercenary man! The Donna's conduct, in obliging Antonio and Adonis to quit her house, because they refused to deliver up that which was specifically placed in their charge, appears selfish; but as we have only the men's own account of the affair, she might have acted from good reasons, to us unknown; at least her kindness and attention, both before and after that circumstance, would authorise such an inference.

I waited on this lady the morning after my arrival, to thank her for the great attention which she had paid to our deceased friends, to make arrangements for procuring their effects, and to request that she would supply me with a statement of the expense which she had incurred on their account. All these matters being satisfactorily adjusted, I took my leave of the Donna, whose time, as she was on the point of ascending the river, was fully occupied in preparing for her journey. She, as well as all the Portuguese with whom I conversed at Quilimane, attributed the death of Lieut. Browne and Mr. Kilpatrick entirely to the obstinacy, as

they termed it, of the latter, in pursuing his own practice in preference to that of the natives. To his argument, that a different treatment ought to be adopted in the case of an Englishman of full habit and that of a native of the country, they would not allow any weight; but I paid little attention to all they said, as the subject was ever wound up by some allusion to Mr. Kilpatrick's behaviour, which appears to have been far from conciliating. I have reason to suppose that the anger which he felt towards the people of the country was particularly shown after his return to Chapongah, where, suffering from sickness, and despondingly brooding over the fate of his comrades, he found it at times impossible to restrain the indignation he felt against those to whom, on account of the obstacles which they opposed to the prosecution of the expedition, he attributed the death of Lieut. Browne.

I could not fail to remark the difference in the reception which I experienced from every one during this visit to Quilimane, and that which I had met with on my arrival last year with the Senna party. Mr. Bowie, the midshipman who accompanied me, and I were

invited, by the governor's previous direction, to reside at his house, where every arrangement was made that could tend to our comfort; this, however, I declined, preferring such accommodation as the slaver afforded. When not otherwise engaged, we dined every day at the governor's, but generally breakfasted on board; for which we were often taken to task by the secretary and such of the governor's relations as were residing at his house. Throughout the day, liqueurs, wines, and other refreshments were placed on a sideboard for our use; when we did not appear at meal-times, a servant was sent to call us, and, in case we declined attending, he would shortly return with such plates of meat as we had been observed generally to prefer. This hospitable treatment was not confined to the governor's establishment alone; but in two or three instances we met with the same attentions from the principal families residing in the place. By one of these the boat's crew, while passing, were called in and sumptuously entertained; and at parting they were presented with two pigs, six fowls, and a basket of oranges.

The governor's answer to the letter of which

I was the bearer arrived on the evening of the 15th. We left the town immediately, and proceeded down the river as long as the ebb lasted, and before daylight next morning continued our course; yet, from the unfavourable time of tide, it was ten o'clock before we came to the river's mouth. On the middle bar and that to the northward the break was very great; but in the channel followed by boats there was comparatively little. I knew that it was not advisable to try the passage during the ebb; yet, as that had only just commenced, and I had several times before accomplished it with safety under far worse circumstances, I determined, as there appeared to be no danger, to push over the bar and get on board as fast as possible, well knowing that Captain Vidal must feel much anxiety on account of our long absence. We passed safely over the low break that at first limited our view, and then it was that we perceived the danger of our situation. During the time that we were at the town, bad weather had prevailed at sea, and the swell which it occasioned rolled in on the bar, and formed a line of breakers right across the boat channel that was truly appalling. To return against the wind

and tide was impossible, and to remain where we were equally so. Promptness of action and steady determination were all we had to trust to.

A small space was observed in the line of break, where, sometimes for a minute or two, the fury of the rollers abated. We waited until one had passed, and, with all our strength on the oars, attempted to make good our passage. In one instant we were among them, and in the next were opposed by a roller exceeding in size any that we had before seen. It came furiously on, and, curling over the boat to the height of ten feet or more, appeared to threaten instant destruction. It burst upon us and swamped the boat, yet, most fortunately, did not overturn her. She had sufficient buoyancy left to keep us up; and, as we drove out with the tide through the breakers, I gave orders for the oars to be kept forcibly out in their places, to give her greater stability in retaining an upright position. The cool collected conduct of the men, in this instance, did them great credit; had they allowed their fears to overcome their sense of duty, we must all have inevitably perished: the boat, bottom-up, would have drifted

out with the tide to where the southerly current prevailed, and have been carried by it to sea unperceived by any person on board the brig, whose anchorage was so far out. We were loaded with various articles, which probably, in the first instance, prevented the boat from overturning: these, as soon as we had got outside the break, we by a simultaneous effort threw overboard. This expedient had the desired effect of raising the gunwale a little above the water, so as to enable us by active exertion to bale out at first somewhat more water than the boat took in. The labour soon became less, and in a short time we perceived with joy and gratitude that our danger was at an end.

We anchored in smooth water, for the purpose of picking up such buoyant articles as in the general clearance were cast overboard and might float out with the ebb. By this precaution some things of value were regained, but by far the greater part were lost. Among those belonging to me, which were not recovered, was a canteen, the loss of which I felt severely, as it was irreparable. It appears a strange coincidence of circumstances, that the boat which took the Senna party in, and that

which brought the survivors away, should both have experienced so narrow an escape on the bar. The former adventure might be considered as an omen of the fatal termination of the expedition, the latter as a wind-up to the relation of it. Favoured by the strong ebb and a fine breeze, we soon reached the brig, and shortly afterwards weighed, and stood out on a wind for Madagascar.

CHAPTER III.

Arrival at St. Augustine's Bay, Madagascar.—Canoes of the Natives.—Their Construction.—The Blind Interpreter.—Tom Brahvah.—His Dress and Decorations.—Demand of Presents for the King.—Traffic on Board.—The Barracouta is joined by the Albatross.—Operations of the latter during her absence.—Visits the Chesterfield Islands.—St. Juan de Nova.—Narrow Escape from Shipwreck near the Barren Islands.—The Vessels stand into St. Augustine's Bay.—Particulars concerning the West Coast of Madagascar.—Thievish Disposition of the Natives.—Tom Planter.—Tullia Bay.—Visit from King Bahbah.—Prince Duke's Wife.—Survey of the Coast to the Northward.—First Island.—Murder of Messrs. Bowie and Parker by the Natives.—Indignation of the Crew.—Appearance of the Bodies.—Laborious Survey between St. Augustine's Bay and Bembatooka.—Nature of the Coast and Islands.—Boyana Bay.—Arrival at Bembatooka.

Our voyage to Madagascar proved much longer than we expected, for in our attempt to cross the channel we were twice foiled. Heavy squalls, with rain, strong breezes, and calms, followed one another in rapid succession, ac-

companied by much swell and a current directly against us; yet, in spite of these, we persevered, until about mid-channel we came into the influence of a strong gale from south-south-west, against which and the sea that it knocked up, we could not make head. We were therefore obliged to return to the African shore, and there beat up till we were sufficiently to the southward to make a third attempt at the passage, in which we were more fortunate, and, in the night of the 19th of May, anchored off Sandy Islands, situated at the southern extreme of St. Augustine's Bay, Madagascar.

Next morning, as soon as daylight appeared, we observed several dark spots, opening to the view through the thick fog that hung about the mouth of the river Oneghaloghe, and the lofty white cliffs that limit the south side of the bay. They quickly approached, and were soon made out to be canoes, striving which should first reach the brig. They were of slight make, about twenty-two feet long, two broad, and the same in depth, and having the head and stern formed somewhat like those of the ancient galleys. Their small comparative breadth and lightness of construction require

some contrivance to give them that stability which otherwise they do not possess: a log of wood, fastened as a canoe is rigged out on one side at the end of two long poles, completely answers the purpose; while, from its slight make, it retards not the progress of the canoe: on the contrary, when blowing fresh, it is evidently the means of accelerating its progress, as it allows of more sail than could possibly be carried by canoes of the common build. Their sails are square, made of matting, and distended at the head by means of two masts which are set up in a piece of wood along the bottom of the canoe. This has several holes in it to allow the masts to be shifted according as the wind requires. They are secured by a lashing of the foremost outriggers and the sheets to the same, and the braces from the mast-head are led aft. The crews use paddles, and manage them with great dexterity, yet I never saw one of their canoes outside the reefs; they appear to dread bad weather, and generally quit the vessel which they are visiting as soon as the strong sea-breeze sets in.

The headmost canoes, when they got tolerably near us, waited until the next came

up before they could venture farther. One then approached and questioned us through the medium of their interpreter, an old blind man, who, holding his head down, as if conning a written speech, delivered his harangue with stentorian power, wonderful volubility, and endless repetition: "Wah ship dat? me speakee you cappen for King Bahbah. Greatee King, all de same King Zhorje (George). Franshee ship? Engleze ship? You friendee me, me friendee you; you tradee (trade with) me, me tradee you; you presentee me (make a present), me presentee you; me no little boy, grandee man, soulyer (soldier) for King Bahbah." Having thus spoken, and pretty well exhausted his breath in his ten minutes' vociferating repetition of it, Tom Brahvah, who was in the same canoe, broke in upon the blind man's story, and thus introduced himself: "Me Tom Brahvah; you sabbee Tom Brahvah. Tom Brahvah speakee you cappen; Tom Brahvah no little boy, no fisherman; gobernor (a chief) for King Bahbah." In this way he ran on for some time, and at last concluded with "Speakum Tom Brahvah — come he come." He was welcomed accordingly, and, accompanied by the blind man, soon made his appearance on deck.

His costume, which was that of the country, principally consisted in a large white garment of native manufacture, ornamented with three black streaks near the edges, and one across the middle: it was secured round his waist, a small part hanging down before, and forming a sort of kilt, while the rest was negligently thrown across the shoulders. This garment had in all cases a pleasing effect, but on some it really appeared elegant from the careful and becoming way in which the folds were arranged: it tended to prove that dandyism is as common among the rudest tribes of savages as it is in the most polished circles of civilized life. But to return to Tom Brahvah. Round his neck were suspended a string of beads and drops of cut glass of various sizes and colours. Some of the smaller of the former were used to decorate a piece of wood, shaped like the float of an angling line, about two inches and a half long. On his wrists he had bangles of silver; and his long black hair was plaited into small tails, three or four inches in length, with a knot at the end. These were trimmed so as not to hang below an imaginary line that might pass just above the eyebrows and across the ear.

About half-way from one in the centre of his forehead, a circular piece of ivory was suspended, an inch and a half in diameter and neatly turned.

On ascending the deck, he took his blind comrade by the hand, and pushed his way to Captain Vidal, to whom the pair repeated all that they had before said, and with as loud a voice, especially when they perceived that they were not understood. But the clamour that they made was trifling compared with the uproar that ensued when the rest of their countrymen had got on board. They had too much assurance to pay attention to broad hints, or even to the plain declaration that their noise was disagreeable: nothing less than turning them out of the vessel had any effect,—a measure to which we were driven in three or four instances. Our visiters had scarcely been five minutes on board before they became very troublesome for presents. King Bahbah, in whose name the greatest demand was always made, was to have one barrel of gunpowder and one of brandy, two muskets, two hundred flints, and the same number of ball-cartridges. A tone of request was by no means adopted;

on the contrary, the present was demanded as a right, not as a voluntary donation. Such domineering conduct in all probability owed its origin to the intercourse of the natives with merchant-vessels, which some years ago were more in the habit of visiting the bay than at present. Being weakly manned, it was to their interest to conciliate the good-will of the natives by presents, that they might obtain refreshments and assistance in wooding and watering. This no doubt was previously considered, and cheap articles for the purpose were accordingly provided.

The natives who were admitted on board amounted in all to thirty. They brought with them sheep of a small breed, goats, Guinea fowls and common ones, macaucoes, or, as they are sometimes termed, Madagascar cats, watermelons, lemons, bananas, plantains, sugar-canes, honey, pompions, milk, and various sorts of shells, all which they greedily bartered for dollars, beads, blue dungaree (which they call clout), looking-glasses, bottles, more especially case-bottles, brass, &c. They understood well how to drive a bargain, yet our goods were in such request that, even allowing that the na-

tives obtained their utmost demand, the purchaser had no reason to complain; for with a dozen common small earthenware beads he could procure sufficient refreshments to last him for the day, and his mess for a week by the proceeds of a small dog-bell, purchased in London for four-pence.

As the sun got up, the fog dispersed, and we were soon joined by the Albatross, Lieutenant W. Mudge, who had been three weeks in the bay, and had nearly completed the survey of it, together with that of Tullia. In his passage from Mozambique, he called at the Chesterfield Islands,* nearly at the extremity of the extensive Praul bank of coral, completely covered with sand, on which there is not the slightest appearance of vegetation. The sea around swarms with fish; and the island itself, during the proper season, abounds with turtle, which resort thither to deposit their eggs. As the schooner approached, her crew observed some people on the island, whom they imagined to have been cast away, and a boat was therefore

* It has been the custom to denominate this the Chesterfield Shoals, as well as Latham's Islands. I have preferred applying to them the proper term.

sent to bring them off, or to render them any other assistance: however, when the boat reached the shore, the shipwrecked mariners, as they were conjectured to be, turned out to be a party of native fishermen from Madagascar, who, in the pursuit of their avocation, as we afterwards learned, often perform that voyage in their frail barks. How they find their way is really extraordinary, for the island, on account of its slight elevation and diminutive size, cannot be distinguished at a greater distance than seven or eight miles. It was the first instance we witnessed of the venturous character of the Malegasch, and from it an inference was drawn in their favour, which a better knowledge of them afterwards tended to confirm. The qualifications which they possess would, in a civilized state, render them a great people, but, in the present condition of the greater proportion of them, they tend only to aggravate such vices as are peculiar to man in a savage state.

After leaving Chesterfield Islands, the Albatross proceeded to that of Juan de Nova, situated on a coral bank of small dimensions, rising abruptly from an unfathomable depth. It is

covered with thick jungle and lofty trees. After leaving this island, Lieutenant Mudge beat up towards St. Augustine's, at times limiting in his way the extent of soundings off shore, by doing which, near the Barren Islands, he narrowly escaped shipwreck on a small coral knoll, on which the sea broke with great fury. It was during the night, and the danger was not seen until the vessel was close upon it. They tacked immediately, but, as the wind was light, they could not stem the current which set them down; and, as a last resource, they were obliged to anchor in shoal water and foul bottom, on the verge of the break, yet close to an unfathomable depth.

We remained at our anchorage off the island until the sea-breeze set in, when we weighed, and, in company with the schooner, stood into the bay, and soon after brought up off the Tent Rock, so termed from its peculiar form. It is situated under the white cliffs already mentioned, and evidently at one time formed a portion of them. St. Augustine's appears to be the only port on the west coast of Madagascar well known to the early navigators; whereas the opposite side of the island was resorted to

by numbers of vessels, more especially French, who planted colonies on it at Fort Dauphin, the Island of St. Mary, and other places. The old charts are tolerably correct in their delineation of the greatest part of that coast, but not of the west side; for, with the exception of St. Augustine's, not the least resemblance can be traced. They merely appear to have known that harbours and bays of the finest kind existed there; and even the modern ones, until Captain D. Inverarity surveyed a portion of the coast, were equally bad.

Robert Drury, in the interesting narrative of his Captivity in Madagascar from 1701 to 1716, describes St. Augustine's Bay, and states that it was then much resorted to by the English, to whom the reigning monarch was greatly attached. The vessels were mostly engaged in the slave-trade, and sometimes in part manned by free natives of Delagoa. On their arrival they established factory-houses on shore, where, from the friendship of the king, they dwelt in perfect safety. I can find no account that mentions how St. Augustine's fared after the downfall of this monarch, who was defeated and dethroned by the son of a chief

residing near Moucandavah. In 1791, Lord Keith, in his way to the East Indies, refreshed his fleet there; but since that time few men-of-war have visited the place; and, as vessels bound to the East Indies, which used to call there, have ceased to do so, the intercourse of the people of St. Augustine's at present is principally confined to the whalers, excepting that now and then a slaver comes in either for refreshments or to obtain an addition to his cargo. In our first visit we saw sufficient to convince us that slaves can be purchased only in limited number at St. Augustine's.

Accustomed to the natives of the main, in whom we had never witnessed a disposition to thieve, we were negligent in taking particular precautions against these people, so widely differing in character: however, the detection of one of them in the act of stealing a sounding-lead, convinced us of the necessity of watching their; yet, such was their dexterity, that, notwithstanding our vigilance, they succeeded in purloining many articles. In our way to the Tent Rock anchorage, several natives, from its being our first appearance, had broken through their general rule of retreating when the sea-

breeze set in: they came out and wished to get on board; this, however, they were not permitted to do until after we anchored. Among them was the chief, Tom Planter, who complained most bitterly of the indignity with which he was treated in not being allowed to come on board before. He became at last so loud and troublesome on that subject, and so domineering on the score of presents, that he was ordered away, and dismissed in disgrace —a summary method of proceeding so little anticipated by him that, notwithstanding his acknowledged superior assurance, he departed completely abashed. This rebuff had a good effect on his future conduct; he saw his error, and, possessing good sound sense, took care not to fall into it again. He dwelt a short distance up the river, and was one of the principal chiefs under King Bahbah, who resided at an extensive village in Tullia Bay. The river Oneghaloghe separates the dominions of this potentate from those of King Voosch.

Tullia Bay is formed by a long narrow reef, dry at low-water, and having two channels leading into it; one communicating with St. Augustine's, and the other opening to the sea,

nine miles farther to the northward. It affords in every part safe and commodious anchorage, at all times of the year, for the largest ships. In the vicinity of the bay the country is low, but, at a little distance back, it rises into a lofty range of hills, above which towers a conspicuous one resembling the roof of a house, and named Westminster Hall.

After quitting St. Augustine's, we anchored one night in Tullia, to pick up the schooner, which had just completed the survey of it. It was late in the afternoon when we brought up near the village where King Bahbah resided. Two canoes, bringing Tom Planter and several more chiefs, immediately came alongside to announce Bahbah's intention to visit us, to settle the preliminary of a salute on his ascending the side, and to request that one of our boats might be sent for him. All this was acceded to; and soon afterwards Bahbah, with his queen, escorted by about a dozen canoes, containing his chiefs and guard, made their appearance. A salute of two small brass guns was fired as he passed the gangway. He was a tall fine-looking man, apparently about thirty-five, and was to be distinguished from his subjects

only by the lofty crimson square cap which he wore. His wife was loaded with beads and trinkets; and, although she had passed the meridian of her charms, yet sufficient remained to denote that she had once been a handsome woman. Bahbah did not presume on account of his rank, and was silent respecting presents: however, that forbearance I imagine had been previously concerted between him and his chiefs; for they, by their insolent demands in his name, made ample amends for the king's forbearance to plead for himself.

As a compliment, Captain Vidal for the first time admitted Bahbah and his chiefs to his cabin: but he had cause to repent his politeness; for they were noisy and troublesome; they drank until they became almost inebriated, and purloined every article that came within their reach. After they had been on board a short time, many of their wives and children came off. Among the former was the wife of Prince Duke, a woman about thirty, bordering on five feet ten inches in height, and possessing a most majestic and symmetrical form. In her younger years she had evidently been handsome; but beauty in Madagascar, as

in other countries in the same latitude, is but of short duration. Striking as was her personal appearance, it was surpassed by the talents which she displayed. She was the only Malegasch woman we ever met with who spoke English, and her poignant wit was rendered far more so by the great powers of mimickry which she possessed. Nothing escaped her observation, and her remarks were ever concise and to the purpose. The party left us in their canoes, late at night; and, next day at noon, in company with the schooner, we commenced our survey of the coast to the northward.

On the 22nd, we got sight of First Island, situated about three miles from the main, in latitude 22° 5′ south, and longitude 43° 7′ east,* where, a few days afterwards, in the course of the survey of that and others to the northward, two of our midshipmen were barbarously murdered by the natives. Mr. Bowie, the elder, a gentleman who had passed his examination some years for lieutenant, had joined us but lately; the other, Mr. Parsons, came out with us from England, and was about eighteen years of age. They were ordered to

* Not corrected.

the island for the purpose of obtaining some angles out, which were requisite for the survey; and, while so employed, Mr. Bowie, who had charge of the boat, imprudently sent the crew out of sight in search of shells. They returned once, on the fire of a musket, and found the two officers in the boat conversing with one of the natives; for numbers of these are in the habit of resorting daily to the island for shell-fish, which abound on the reefs, but have no habitations there, probably for fear of being entrapped by passing vessels and carried away as slaves. To this cause also we were inclined to attribute the numerous bonfires which, after we anchored, blazed nightly along the coast in our vicinity—signals probably of alarm, to denote that a vessel was near. The crew had been gone a second time about half an hour, and then began returning; when the man who was foremost, on gaining the height of an intervening sandy point, suddenly gave the alarm, by exclaiming that the officers were missing from the boat. It was immediately anticipated that some catastrophe had happened, and all hastily rushed towards the spot. As they approached, something was observed turning

round and round in the wash of the surf, that beat heavily on the shore: it was the dead body of Mr. Parsons. They picked it up, and swam to the boat, where the first object they discovered was Mr. Bowie, stretched over the table, with no other indication of life remaining than a slight pulsation in the wrist, which in a few minutes ceased. This bloody work was perpetrated for the sake of one musket, all else in the boat remaining untouched. The grapnel was weighed, and, favoured by the strong sea-breeze that had just set in, the boat soon reached the brig, which was at anchor at the time about nine miles off, under the lee of Second Island. It was well that her crew quitted when they did; for no sooner were they gone than a body of armed natives were observed hurrying down to the spot, probably with the intention of plundering and destroying the boat, and thus preventing the escape of the crew. I should imagine that, immediately after they had murdered the officers, they went in search of the seamen, but fortunately took a wrong direction.

The feelings of all on board, when the catastrophe was communicated, may easily be

imagined. There was a general burst of indignation and impatience to punish the murderers; yet, willing as we all were to join in that work, reflection soon convinced us that it would be impossible; for, short as the distance was, the opposing sea-breeze blew so strong that darkness would have set in long before we could reach the spot. Even then we should gain nothing; for the natives, who had evidently only prolonged their usual stay on the island to perpetrate the deed, would, as soon as that was accomplished, hurry off to the main for security. There we might find villages and plenty of inhabitants; yet, irritated as we were, we could not for a moment entertain an idea of visiting the crime of a few individuals on an innocent multitude. Such a retaliation could only be excused on the ground of a repetition of the like individual acts of hostility.

On examination of the body of Mr. Bowie, it was found pierced with five wounds, one of which, in the arm, was apparently received while endeavouring to defend himself. These were mortal, and all of them seemed to have been dealt by a spear or a strong knife. Mr. Parsons had received four wounds in the back,

and with such force had the instrument been impelled in one instance, that it even severed a rib in two in its passage to the chest. They were separately mortal, and were inflicted probably while he was endeavouring to effect his escape. The appearance of the bodies, and the ideas connected with them, were so distressing to us all, that, as soon as the surgeon's examination was over, they were conveyed on shore, and interred with military honours in a grave adjoining to that in which was deposited the corpse of one of our seamen, who had died the day before of consumption produced by fever. Captain Vidal, the officers, and many of the crew attended. The appellation of First Island we changed to that of Murder, and Second Island we named Morrison, after the deceased seaman.

In the whole course of our survey, we never passed a period more uninteresting, or of greater labour and privation, than we did between St. Augustine's Bay and Bembatooka. The natives, wherever we appeared, shunned our vicinity, except in passing through the open roadstead of Moucandavah, where five boats full of them came alongside. These people stunned us by vociferating for presents and beseeching

us to anchor. Their principal demands were in behalf of King Bahbah, who, they affirmed, was the sovereign of that country as well as of Tullia. They obtained nothing; for we were not in want of food or water, and the place otherwise held out no temptations whatever to induce us to stop. It is situated in latitude 20° 17′ 5″ south, and longitude 44° 9′ east, and formerly was much frequented, but at present a vessel is a rare phenomenon; so that I had no reason to doubt the assertion of one of the natives, who, in a sorrowful tone, emphatically declared that "Moucandavah no ab much now; no plenty ship set down dere."

The coast of the main, from St. Augustine's to Boyana Bay, consists, except in one or two solitary instances, of a uniform low and marshy plain, irrigated by barred rivers, and often bounded by a bank of coral sands and shallows, faced at the edge of deep water by a line of sharp-pointed coral masses, uncovered when the tide is out, and in two or three places containing a complete archipelago of islet rocks, assuming a variety of fantastic shapes, among which that of the cauliflower was the most predominant. The strand was always sandy,

and the land was sometimes of the same nature, yet was always thickly covered with trees of stunted growth, above which, in the immediate vicinity of the sea, the elegant casuarina often stood conspicuous. The hilly ridge of Tullia gradually receded, until it became entirely lost to the view a few miles farther to the northward. It was throughout of slight elevation; but not so the mountain range which, about thirty miles inland of Moucandavah and the Barren Isles, rose, generally sloping from the intermediate low land and plain, to the height of two or three thousand feet.

The coral islets and reefs that skirt the coast are very numerous, and to those unacquainted with them dangerous in the extreme, but not so to others, to whom they afford at all seasons safe and commodious anchorages. The extensive group termed Barren Islands, in particular, furnish excellent harbours; yet they are only worth resorting to for wood, with which they are thickly covered; for vain, as we experienced, were attempts to procure fresh water on them, and it would be equally vain, I should imagine, to try to obtain it from the rivers on the main, since, independently of treacherous

attacks from the natives, the rivers cannot be communicated with unless at high-water, and during the prevalence of the light land-breeze. Even then, considering their diminutive size, (with the exception of one about fourteen miles to the northward of First Island,) the slight elevation of the plain, and its apparently marshy nature, the water in them is probably brackish for a long way up.

The islands in the whole extent of the coast are low, and of coral, and rarely exceed one mile in circumference; even the largest is less than three. It is an observation worthy of remark, and equally applicable to the whole, that the reefs on which they are situated always extend to the southward, leaving the island on their opposite extremity approachable in deep water close to: a fact that it would be difficult to account for otherwise than by the violence of the south-south-west sea-breeze, which, by the heavy sea that it occasions, sweeps from the surface of that part of the reefs immediately exposed to its fury any deposit of sand that might in time form an islet there. What renders the reefs particularly dangerous to those unacquainted with their vicinity is, the dis-

coloured state of the water, that precludes at high tide the possibility of making them out; neither are the soundings any criterion to judge by, for the depth immediately encircling their limits is, generally speaking, greater than in other parts, yet not sufficiently so to indicate that no danger is near.

The prosecution of the survey was rendered tedious in the extreme by the winds that prevailed; for, as the dangers along the coast were unknown, we never could venture on unless favoured by a moderate breeze. Those from south-south-west, which we had every day, often set in with such fury as almost to preclude the possibility of escaping utter destruction should we unfortunately get upon a sunken reef. The land-breeze was generally light, and so variable, that it was as often fair as foul. I have been thus particular in the description of this part of the coast, as it really appears to be but little known.

Excepting an insignificant shallow bay near First Island, that of Boyana was the first of importance that we came to. It is noticed in the charts by name, but the representation is highly erroneous. Although insignificant, when com-

pared with the beautiful bays to the northward, it was interesting to us from the break that it offered to the wretched uniformity of the coast on which we had so long been lingering. The luxuriance of the hills that surrounded it, in some parts exhibiting at the water's edge a precipitous character, was a novelty to us; and the same may be said of the enclosed nature of the place, the unruffled state of its waters in the early part of the day, and the refreshing yet not boisterous sea-breeze of the afternoon.

The survey of this bay limited our efforts for the present; for the stock of fresh water on board was so reduced that, in order to make it last until our arrival at Bembatooka, we were obliged to go upon an allowance of three pints a day. Those only who have been in the like circumstances can duly appreciate this privation, aggravated as it was by our unavoidable salt-beef fare, and the oppressive heat of a burning climate. We hove up in company with the schooner, and made the best of our way to Bembatooka, where we arrived on the 15th of July 1824.

CHAPTER IV.

Bembatooka Bay.—Trade.—Jerking Beef.—The Succahlahvoes.—Heroism of the Prince of Bembatooka.—The Ovah People.—Devotion to their Country.—Interview between Rahdahmah, King of Madagascar, and Commodore Nourse.—Person and Character of Rahdahmah.—His Brothers.—Treaty between the English and Rahdahmah.—His Good Faith.—Law of Succession to the Throne.—Female Incontinence.—Destruction of Rahdahmah's Child.—Plurality of Wives.—Polite conduct of Rahdahmah.—His Enmity to Superstitious Customs; Examples of it.—His Inflexible Justice. — Ovah Bravery. — The Garrison. — An Ovah Sentry.

THE northern half of the west coast of Madagascar is indented by a series of bays, rivers, and harbours, so admirably adapted in every respect for commerce, that, were the island in a civilized state, and the commercial spirit of the people directed into a proper channel, it would doubtless in a short time be resorted to by vessels of all countries; yet, as a small portion

only of the inhabitants are but just emerging from a state of barbarism, these harbours, with the exception of Bembatooka, are entirely neglected, unless at times an Arab dow casually pays them a visit to procure sandal-wood and to jerk beef. Their existence even was, as it has been already stated in the last chapter, scarcely known, before Captain Inverarity, in 1802, undertook his excellent, yet partial survey of them.

The Bay of Bembatooka, as it is called, is in reality the mouth of a series of rivers, branching off from it, and running far into the interior. It is seventeen miles in depth, and three and a half across at the entrance; but inside, it is generally more than twice that width, excepting about half-way, where the shores on each side approach and leave a narrow channel only three miles broad, through which the rush of the pent-up waters is so vehement, as to have scooped out an abyss sixty-three fathoms in depth, which, limited to an inconsiderable breadth, extends even outside the entrance of the bay. The shore in most parts is low and covered with mangroves, but

rises in others into a lofty hilly range, which, were it cultivated, would yield a grateful return.

Bembatooka itself is an inconsiderable village; but, Majunga, or as the natives term it, Mähzhoongäh, situated on the northern side of the bay, near the entrance, is a large and straggling town, nearly a mile in extent, and containing a numerous population of native Malegasch and Arabs, whose forefathers were settled there from time immemorial, and who appear, from the relics of their tombs and other traces of them, to have been anciently much more numerous than they are at present. The style of the buildings in the town varies, like its inhabitants, one half being Arab, the other Malegasch. The government, until a few days before our arrival, when Rahdahmah, with a numerous army, marched in and took possession of it, was vested in three men, who were appointed by the native prince of the country immediately surrounding the place. Of these one was a Malegasch, the representative of that part of the community, and protector of their rights. Another was chief of the Arabs; and the third had the guardianship of strangers.

They were equal in power, consulted together in forming arrangements for the benefit of the place, and in concert passed judgment in the causes that were brought before them. The slave-trade was the principal source whence Bembatooka derived its wealth, until Rahdahmah, on his arrival, suppressed it, pursuant to his agreement with the English. A trade with the Arabs was also carried on in bees-wax, gums of two or three kinds, and rice; but this branch of commerce was of secondary importance when compared with the extensive traffic in bullocks, in which, for the two last years in particular, they have been engaged with the Americans, who jerk the beef on the spot, preserve the tallow, and cure the hides. Three vessels from the United States were lying there when we arrived, and actively employed in completing their cargoes, before the commencement of the wet season, during which it is scarcely possible to cure the beef.

Notwithstanding the great distance which the Americans have to come, and the long delay to which they are liable in procuring a cargo, they find this trade very lucrative. The bullocks are generally purchased for two

dollars each, and the same price is given for two hundred of their horns. The beef, when jerked, and the expenses paid, they can well afford to sell at four dollars a barrel, on their return to America; where the common salt beef is sold for much more. The horns yield a far greater profit than the beef or even the hides. The method which the Americans pursue in their traffic is admirably adapted to the kind of people with whom they have to deal.

A nation of savages can scarcely be termed a community; every man acts for himself. Self is his god; and, jealous of another's prosperity or success, he regards with a suspicious eye that junction of interest, which, while it tends to enrich him, may perchance increase the prosperity of his neighbour. United efforts and public spirit, which civilize mankind, and render nations great and flourishing, are therefore unknown to the savage. Force is the only law that he acknowledges; and petty warfare, slavery, and stagnation of trade are the result. The natural resources and the great commercial interests of the country are neglected and unknown, and no semblance of trade remains but a petty peddling traffic, which the Americans

meet by establishing a small shop on shore, where they retail a variety of assorted goods for the minor articles of trade which the natives individually bring in for sale. The profit in this way is very great, and serves to defray the expenses of the wear and tear of the vessel and the wages of the crew.

On their arrival, the Americans erect or purchase a large wooden building, with a yard, or pound, attached to it, where they slaughter their bullocks and jerk their beef. Their mode of proceeding is as follows.

The beasts, which are generally very intractable, are driven to the gate of the pound, and, as they pass through, hamstrung by a native, who stands inside with a sharp curved piece of steel attached to the end of a pole for that purpose. They are afterwards slaughtered as they are wanted, and the meat cut off from the bones in large junks, which, after being jagged with a knife, are placed on benches in the building and well rubbed with salt. This operation over, they are carried outside and spread on a platform of planks, exposed to the sun, where for some days they remain; but during the night they are always carried care-

fully within doors, and there kept until the sun has risen in the morning and dispersed the dew of the night, which, during our stay at Bembatooka, was always very heavy. This last operation is repeated until the meat becomes perfectly dry and fit for heading up.

In this manner they can kill and cure thirty bullocks a day, averaging from four to five hundred pounds each; nevertheless it takes them four or five months to complete their cargoes, as a vessel of two hundred and sixty tons will carry about five thousand bullocks jerked, including also their tallow melted down, the hides cured, and the horns. The tongues they sometimes pickle, but generally dry them with the beef. The head, heart, offal, and bones are thrown away, and in great quantities left even in the middle of the town to putrefy in the sun, and to infect the air with most disgusting effluvia, highly productive of disease. The arrival of Rahdahmah's troops, and the garrison which he left there, tended much to check this filthy practice, for the offal of the slaughter-house was highly acceptable to them, as it was also to our seamen, who, after being so long a time on salt fare, were glad to avail

themselves of the heads and hearts of the bullocks, which were at their service whenever they chose to take them.

The smell of the offal attracts to the town and its environs a great number of a large species of brown hawk, piebald crows, and the common fly. The first are observed soaring watchfully in the air, with talons open, and a bright piercing eye bent on their prey below, until a dainty morsel fashioned to their appetite meets their keen gaze; when in an instant they pounce down, and, fixing their talons in the piece, generally soar again into the air, there to devour it unmolested in their own undisputed region.

The canoes of Bembatooka resemble those of St. Augustine's, but the use of them is in a great measure superseded by the dows and boats of Arab construction, that may be observed daily communicating in numbers with various parts of the bay, and sometimes the rivers. They, as well as many schelingahs, are built at Majunga. The Arabs differ not from those of the main, nor the Malegasch from others of their countrymen excepting in speech; for it is well worthy of remark, that at either

extremity of Madagascar the natives have the same language, whereas a different one is spoken in the intermediate extent of coast, and another again in the central parts of the island, although the first and the last of these languages have many words in common.

The south side of Bembatooka Bay is inhabited by a tribe called Saccahlahvoes, who, in Robert Drury's time, extended as far north as Moucandavah, and possessed the same warlike character as at present. They are likewise noted by the celebrated adventurer Benyowsky; and in Mr. Prior's Voyage of the Nisus they are said to be the people who so often harassed the inhabitants of Johanna. No doubt this assertion is correct; yet, allowing that they knew that such an island existed, I cannot imagine that they could have steered their canoes thither without the assistance of some one better acquainted with nautical affairs than themselves; for although, to our astonishment, we had, as before stated, found them visiting Chesterfield Islands in their canoes, yet even that distance is very trifling compared with the voyage from Bembatooka to Johanna.

The Arabs of the former place I considered

to be the projectors of the expeditions, and, in an underhand way, the principal actors in them. The overwhelming force of Rahdahmah kept the Saccahlahvoes quiet while he was in the vicinity; and they remained so while the garrison which he left continued strong: when that ceased to be the case, the turbulent disposition of the tribe soon manifested itself by a general insurrection, as will be hereafter related.

The Malegasch, in whatever part of the island we find them, are a fine independent race of men. In no instance was this better exemplified than in the behaviour of the prince who ruled over Bembatooka and the surrounding territory. Disdaining to submit to Rahdahmah, although his country was subdued, he persisted in the determination of singly opposing by force the approach of the Ovah troops. The king, wishing to save him, sent a deputation to endeavour to prevail upon him to submit, but it was to no purpose; he was fixed in his resolution, and the reason he gave was such as well became a brave and independent chief. "I am old," said he, "and can have but a short time to live; and free as I was born, so free will I die. I will not in my old age cowardly

yield up that which my forefathers bequeathed me, and basely crouch for the remainder of my days at the feet of one who tears my possessions from me. No! let them advance; I will die as becomes a chief!" He was shot by the Ovah soldiers, deliberately firing at them as they approached.

Beasts of prey are unknown in Madagascar, and I have never heard that snakes, either formidable in size or of poisonous bite, were to be found there; but the rivers abound with alligators, and scorpions are plentiful in every part, more especially at Bembatooka, as I had one day an opportunity of ascertaining. Having accidentally displaced a large stone, resting on the declivity of a projecting point, a little above high-water mark, I found a black scorpion, five inches in length, coiled up under it, and in such a lethargic state, that, although when touched by a stick it resented the affront by stinging it with its tail, it would not change its position until it had been repeatedly irritated in the same manner. Several other stones were afterwards lifted up, and most of them had underneath one or more of the same venomous reptiles.

After these few remarks respecting Bembatooka, I shall turn to the kingdom of Ovah and its enterprising prince, Rahdahmah — a subject in which every Englishman, however casual may be his visit to Madagascar, must feel deeply interested. Independently of the pleasing novelty of a nation overcoming the prejudices and customs engendered by superstition and ignorance from time immemorial, suddenly grasping, as it were, the highest attributes of civilization, and surmounting every difficulty in the attainment of its object, he finds himself surrounded by a people emulous to imitate his habits, solicitous of his acquaintance, and gratefully attached to his country.

The more he communicates with them the more he must admire their character. Courageous, yet docile, and honourable though not weak, they possess minds highly capable of profiting by instruction. With a thirst for glory and knowledge, that leads them to stray from their home, they have a heart that still fondly lingers there, and a hand that can combat for its interest abroad. Gifted with quick talent, they can perceive the benefits that a grand scheme tends to produce, and know how to make the perse-

verance with which they are endowed surmount every difficulty that stands between them and its accomplishment. Their firm and enthusiastic idea of duty and devotion to their country cannot be better illustrated than by the following example, which in character bears a great affinity to the ancient Roman feeling that was the foundation of the after-prosperity and grandeur of that mighty empire.

Commodore Nourse proposed to Rahdahmah to take a certain number of young Ovah lads, and to teach them seamanship, as well as reading and writing, by distributing them among different vessels in the squadron for the purpose. Pursuant to an application from Captain Vidal, six were ordered to join us: one of these, during the night previous to the embarkation, deserted, and bent his steps back to Tananarievoo, the capital of Ovah, and the place of his nativity. After much fatigue and suffering experienced in the course of his journey, he arrived at his father's door, exhausted by fatigue and a victim to the jungle fever. Differing from the rest of his intended companions on board, he could already read and write English, from which it may be presumed that,

possessing so highly esteemed an accomplishment, he was a son of whom an Ovah father would be proud: yet his father, such was his sense of duty, as soon as his son appeared, stifling his parental feelings, conveyed him as a prisoner to Rahdahmah's ministers. A court was summoned, and the youth adjudged to atone by his death for his breach of duty to his king; but, as he was at the time in the last and mortal stage of the jungle fever, the retributive penalty was left to the hand of Nature. Mr. Hastie begged hard for his life, immediately after the offence was committed; but Rahdahmah, ever inexorable in justice, answered by informing him that only a day or two before two soldiers had suffered for the like offence. This penalty of death for desertion was established in the early part of Rahdahmah's career, by the unanimous voice of the Ovah people, who were chagrined at the dishonourable failure of an expedition through the reprehensible conduct of a large portion of the army, who forsook their ranks, and returned home before the service was completed.

An opportunity occurred of seeing Rahdahmah, of which I gladly availed myself. Com-

modore Nourse, who had arranged to meet him at Bembatooka, arrived there for that purpose, a few days after us; and the prince, who was encamped with his army at a short distance inland, immediately came down to receive him. It was their first interview, and the Commodore, with a large suite of officers, his band and guard in attendance, proceeded to Rămăneetooka house, where Rahdahmah awaited his arrival. I entered, a few minutes after the introduction had taken place, and, during the few insipid remarks which in such visits generally precede others of a more interesting nature, had time to survey at leisure a prince of whom I had heard so much. Rahdahmah, although upwards of thirty, appeared many years younger: his stature did not exceed five feet five inches, and his figure was slight, elegant, and graceful. His demeanour, which was diffident in the extreme, did not coincide with the idea that a man is apt to form even of one accustomed to a military life and its fatigues, much less to the successful and enterprising prince who combines the hero and the statesman, the idol of a warlike people, and the terror of surround-

ing foes. Yet such is Rahdahmah. Cool, collected, and daring, his mind full of great undertakings, and his whole heart and soul engrossed in their execution and success, still his features remained serene and unruffled, disdaining as it were to betray the host of passions and the storms of ambition that raged within. His appearance was altogether that of one better adapted for the courtier than the hero, for the statesman than the soldier, and above all for a domestic circle and a retired life. He conversed with drooping head and downcast eyes, yet not a word escaped which had not been well weighed and studied.

The tone of voice that he assumed was low in the extreme, hesitating, and cautious, as if to gain time for reflection, one minute; plain, firm, and unembarrassed, the next. His features, which were well formed, remained sedate and tranquil, until some part of the conversation of greater interest engaged his attention; then a tremulous half-suppressed motion of the lip, and a hasty stolen glance from his dark expressive eyes, betrayed for an instant the interest he felt, when they were again consigned

to that tranquillity which, though impenetrable in itself, yet keenly remarks and maturely reflects on all that is passing.

I shall conclude this slight sketch of Rahdahmah by quoting the character given of him by Charles Telfair, Esq., late private secretary to Sir Robert Farquhar, when Governor of the Isle of France; a gentleman to whose kindness I am indebted for some interesting facts relative to the above prince and his Ovah possessions; and who, I should hope, from the copious materials which he has so assiduously collected respecting Madagascar, will soon be able to favour the public with a work on that interesting island.

"Rahdahmah is a man far before his countrymen in an exemption from the prejudices in which he was brought up; anxious to learn; apt in seizing on the strong points of a subject; careful in examining them, and resolutely determined in carrying into execution every regulation that can tend to the advancement of his country; and yet his manners are such as not to revolt the feelings of his subjects."

Our political relations with Rahdahmah originated in the earnest desire of Sir R. Far-

quhar to put a stop to the slave-trade of Madagascar. With this view he won his way into the affections and confidence of Rahdahmah, who entrusted to him the education of his two brothers, Ratafique and Rahove, at that period the only heirs to his power and dominions. They remained for a considerable time in Sir Robert's family, under the tuition of Mr. Hastie, the present British resident at the court of Rahdahmah; and by him, after their education was completed, they were conveyed back to Madagascar, and delivered over to their brother, who repaired from his capital to the coast, at Tamatave, to receive them. This interview of Rahdahmah with Mr. Hastie led to that respect and friendship which the former has ever since evinced towards him, as it likewise did to the final conclusion of the treaty. By this measure Rahdahmah was deprived of a revenue of more than sixty thousand dollars, arising from the capitation-tax on all slaves passing through his dominions, as also the profit of the sale of those captives who fell into his hands in the numerous wars that desolated the country.

This revenue, the source of his power, he willingly abandoned in consideration of an an-

nual supply from England of arms, ammunition, clothes, money, &c., which would enable him to subjugate to his sovereignty the whole island of Madagascar, although the amount of the supply was by no means equivalent to the sacrifice which he made. It is estimated at eighteen or twenty thousand dollars annually, and will cease when Rahdahmah's revenue is sufficient to enable him to suppress the system of slavery by the conquest of the numerous tribes which yet attempt to carry it on.

The good faith of the prince, and his strict adherence to each article of the treaty, have been long tried and cannot be exceeded. He even put to death some members of his own family for using their influence to evade it, and to set it aside shortly after it was made. His talents appear to have shone conspicuous from his earliest years; otherwise he could never have won so much upon the affections of the Ovah people, who are naturally bigoted to their ancient customs, as to be enabled to mount the throne on the death of his father: for, although the succession is hereditary, yet, by an ancient law, it is only permitted to be so in the female line: thus, on the king's death,

his sister's eldest son is his successor. This practice appears to proceed from an extreme latitude and perhaps depravity of manners, by which even the chastity of a queen is not supposed to be a sufficient guarantee for the royal blood, and this has led to the following reasoning, as the basis of the law: the king is certain of being the son of his mother, but no one can be sure who his father is; he is also sure that the daughters of his mother are his sisters, and that, although they may have a different father, still they have the royal blood in their veins, which must descend to their offspring, who consequently—that is, the males only—succeed to the throne. Even at present, female chastity is scarcely considered a virtue by the natives of Ovah, and in no family is it less regarded than in the king's. They have, in fact, privileges for unbridled incontinence. The queen-mother, for instance, after the death of the king, is permitted by law to choose a husband, to keep him as long as she likes, and when she thinks proper to change him for another. Each unmarried man of the royal family is also at her disposal, and she may call upon him when she pleases to be her husband for the time.

Although Rahdahmah was enabled by his superior abilities to establish himself on the throne, yet it must be understood that his father, in the first instance, paved his way to it by availing himself of the troubled times, that drew off the attention of his subjects from watching him to the defence of their country. He saved him first from the Ompamsaves, and ever afterwards acknowledged and protected him as his son. Independently of anything else, this single act is sufficient to prove that the father was a great and politic prince, although otherwise he was a savage in comparison with his son

In the numerous wars in which he was engaged, a regiment of grenadiers had always distinguished itself, and on that account gained his especial favour. These men retain the same pre-eminence in the good opinion of his son Rahdahmah, who has clothed them in the regimentals of the English grenadiers, and I certainly never saw a finer-looking body of soldiers.

With a view to prevent, if possible, any infraction of the law of succession, the Ompamsaves, or priests, who have the management of those matters, contrive to convey away the children of the king, but not by open violence, as

soon as they are born, and they are never heard of more. In this way Rahdahmah lost several, until, at the persuasion of Mr. Hastie, he determined to abolish the custom; and as, about that time, he espoused Rossalimo, the virgin daughter of a chieftain of the northern Saccahlahvoes, it was his intention that his first-born son by her should be his successor. When, however, the birth took place, in the absence of Rahdahmah, the royal infant was, like his predecessors, taken from the palace, and, under the plea of illness, conveyed to a neighbouring village, where it was said to have died. Although the Ovah people are so wedded to their ancient customs, yet the abolition of this might be effected, especially by a prince of such popularity and address as Rahdahmah, and time would reconcile his subjects to the act; for, as the love of justice is an acknowledged trait in their character, they might soon be made sensible, by comparing the feelings of the king as a father with their own, how unjust and cruel is that law which renders him the only man in the nation who must toil for the children of another, his own being sacrificed to ensure the certainty.

Were the throne elective and not hereditary, a jealous nation might, from policy, consider such an arrangement necessary; but when the alleged cause is the incontinence of the women, some deference should be paid to the king as a husband, and to his confidence in the virtue of his queen, independently of his feelings as a father, already adverted to. Even the seclusion of the queen, under the watchful superintendence of persons appointed for that purpose, would be far preferable to the present practice.

In failure of sisters' sons, the throne goes to the brothers. Plurality of wives is allowed, and the king by law should have twelve; even when he has not, it is the etiquette of the court to suppose that they exist. Seven or eight are of his own choice, and the rest consist of his father's wives, who are his only in title, being merely deemed so for the purpose of state, and in accordance with the maxims of their religion; as many of them are old, withered, and decrepid. The king has also as many concubines as he chooses; but they are kept secluded, and their progeny unknown and unacknowledged in any public way.

Notwithstanding Rahdahmah's power, and

the ascendency which he has gained in the affections of his people, he can perform no act of importance without calling a kaabah, or consultation of his chiefs, who, as they inherit from their ancestors a proud independent spirit, would prove an insurmountable barrier to any act on the part of a prince of ordinary abilities to extend his prerogative, and to set himself up for an absolute monarch; yet such in reality is Rahdahmah, without appearing to be so. From his success as a warrior, the younger part of his subjects are enthusiastically devoted to his service. These he courts; and, before the meeting of a kaabah, he takes care that they are not left in the dark as to his wishes on the subject about to be discussed. They meet. The old chiefs, whose ideas of enterprise and conquest are checked by the apathy of old age, or lost in its infirmities, are in favour of dilatory measures and prudent foresight as to the consequences that may possibly result. The younger, on the contrary, look to their king, accustomed to follow him to the wars, to witness and share in his success: that enthusiastic energy and affection which animate them in the field alike sway them in the kaabah. The

question is proposed by Rahdahmah : the young chiefs unanimously give their consent ; the middle-aged waver not long ; and the old alone hold out. With the latter, who form the minority, the subtle Rahdahmah always apparently sides. The younger chiefs laugh, the elders are flattered, and Rahdahmah gains his point.

It is thus that he has been enabled to sap and eventually to abolish many superstitions and customs that had been handed down to them by their ancestors from time immemorial. It was held to be a sacred duty by the soldiers forming an Ovah army, when going to war, to pledge themselves by solemn oaths to each other to carry back to their native country the bones of such as should fall. In a late campaign of Rahdahmah's into a sickly country, a great majority of his army fell victims to the fever ; and the task of half cleansing, for they had not time to do it entirely, and carrying the bones of their deceased comrades, fell upon the remaining few. Of these, some died under the weight of the relics of their departed friends, which it was considered infamous and irreligious to abandon ; while others sickened from the noxious odour they produced, and gloomily

expired under the effects of the pestilence they had created. It was not an uncommon sight to behold a soldier creeping painfully along, under the weight of a load of bones, from which at times decayed morsels of flesh would detach themselves and fall in the path, covered with flies and maggots; while, perhaps, the poor man's back at the same instant exhibited many a line, produced by the putrid stream that exuded from the load. The absolute necessity of doing away with this shocking custom enabled Rahdahmah to obtain its repeal in open kaabah, at which many sat who had witnessed the havoc that it occasioned.

The fashion of allowing the hair to grow to a great length, braiding, knotting, and anointing it with cocoa-nut oil and grease, Rahdahmah found to be not only conducive to filth, but very inconvenient,* especially to his soldiers. He therefore determined to do away with it if possible; but, as the necessity for this measure was by no means so urgent as for that to which I have just adverted, he considered it

* This custom of a nation of savages is not more preposterous than was the general and filthy use of pomatum and powder in our own country some years ago.

useless to attempt to carry his point by calling a kaabah, which he was well assured would oppose it. Accordingly, he had recourse to the following expedient: at a general review held by him, he appeared in the field, to the astonishment of all, with his hair cut close, in the military fashion of England. The young men, eager to imitate their king in every action, stole away as soon as they could from the field, and re-appeared before Rahdahmah left it, with their hair as closely cropped as his. The old men were not so easily brought over, and the women set no bounds to their clamour, for it had been their pride to dress their husbands' hair, and to vie with one another in the taste and neatness which they displayed in so doing; and in this way many a morose temper was softened, many a quarrel made up, and many a point gained which words had failed to carry. It cannot be supposed that a custom leading to such conciliating effects in domestic life would be quietly relinquished by those who were benefited by it; the consequence was that the women repaired in a crowd to Rahdahmah, and in a most tumultuous manner insisted upon the revival of it. In vain

the prince represented to them his object in adopting the change; in vain he attempted to combat their objections by jokes: their blood was up, their tongues were going, and Rahdahmah was obliged to resort to other measures, especially as he perceived that the noisy rhetoric of the women, though lost on him, produced its effect on many of the populace. A great ferment was evidently excited; a rebellion was on the eve of taking place; and to restrain it some strong measures were absolutely necessary. Rahdahmah called his guards, and pointing out to them a few of the most troublesome among the women, ordered them to take them to a neighbouring wood, and there to cut their hair off in such a way that it should never grow again. The soldiers obeyed, and, arrived at the wood, prepared to execute their orders, but it became necessary to consider in what manner they were to proceed. "How can the thing be done?" was the question from one to the other. "Cut their hair how we will, or ever so close, it will grow again in spite of our teeth." After turning the matter over in their minds for some time, they hit upon the true meaning of Rahdahmah's words—

they cut off the heads of the turbulent females. By this rigorous measure, sanctioned by the exigency of the case, the disturbance was quelled; short crops became the order of the day, and as attacks when once made upon old forms are generally carried to the extreme, so that which was lately admired and respected is now by the greater number ridiculed and despised as a barbarous custom.

The inhabitants of Majunga were witnesses of Rahdahmah's good faith and stern justice the day after he took the place. When approaching with his army, he had sent forward a messenger to announce that private property should be respected, and that no one need quit the place from fear of molestation. His word was taken, and those who had prepared for flight remained quietly where they were. A woman complained that an Ovah soldier had forcibly taken from her some beads. She was desired to point out the culprit; she did so; the man confessed his guilt, and was shot a few minutes afterwards by Rahdahmah's order. Another circumstance tending to the same point occurred, but I am not acquainted with the particulars.

That the Ovah people possess daring courage their deeds evince, and that it is deeply inherent in them, an event that happened some time ago sufficiently proves. A regiment, armed with spears, their native weapons, fell in with a superior force of the enemy, and, instead of retiring to the woods, as in the old times of savage warfare, to deal the treacherous blow, they boldly attacked the enemy face to face; and I was assured that never did a European regiment at the charge of the bayonet display a more cool, determined, and steady conduct than they did. Their effort was crowned with success; they returned to their countrymen to be held up as prodigies of valour, and the example which they set has ever since been followed. How much better, even for the sake of humanity, are such decisive efforts, than a tedious, petty warfare, in which time is given to visit with the calamities of war the persons and property of those who are in no wise concerned in it, and whose destruction can neither promote nor retard the success of either party, but must, on the contrary, tend to widen the breach between them, and render them foes for ever! The calamities of the field we can bear with

fortitude; but that wound will ever remain cankered which is inflicted by the unsparing hand of rapine and murder on our homes and on the objects of our care and affection there.

The courage of the Ovah people is equalled by their tractability, mildness, and strict adherence to the orders of their superiors, provided those orders are just, and not accompanied by morose or tyrannical conduct, for to such they will never submit. Even Rahdahmah himself, the pride of his people, would not be permitted to rule with such absolute power as to commit unrestrained any act of injustice. His severity in a just cause, were it to border even on cruelty, they would reverence and applaud; but never would they allow their prince to stop the course of justice or to oppress the innocent.

But to return to the interview between the commodore and Rahdahmah. It had gradually acquired increased interest by the conversation becoming more general and animated; for, although political discussion was in great part postponed until the king should visit the frigate next day, yet much passed to develop the character of the prince and his people. Some

slight observations were made respecting the trade and manufactures of the country. As an instance of Ovah ingenuity in the latter, Mr. Hastie produced two clarionets, one of their manufacture and the other made in England. So close was the resemblance, that a casual observation could not have detected the difference. The silver keys, with their springs, in particular, were admirably executed. "Now," it was observed to the commodore, "you may form some idea of the talents of these people, and of the power and affluence which they would attain should they but continue to have the means of following up the present favourable commencement. If Rahdahmah proves successful in his projects, this must inevitably be the case; and, should a long term of years be granted to his valuable life, we may hope that the main spring which has set the machinery in motion may continue with the same wisdom to guide its evolutions, till barbarism and ignorance are banished from the island, and religion and civilization are established in their stead."

The audience lasted about one hour, during which the commodore's band and that of Rahdahmah, composed of black men, alternately

played; the latter having, if anything, the superiority. It was collected at the Isle of France by Mr. Hastie, at the request of Rahdahmah, who supplied him with the requisite means for that purpose. The men were landed, on their arrival, unknown to the prince, and introduced among some troops about to be reviewed by him. He appeared; the band struck up a martial air; and Rahdahmah, equally astonished and delighted, stood entranced as it were with admiration. He hurried them over such pieces as he did not like, but carefully noted down the names of those that pleased him on a small slip of paper, which he always carried in his watch-case for the purpose of writing notes on it.

Instead of returning with the rest of the boats, I amused myself with examining the garrison. It consisted of a vast assemblage of huts, built in the usual style, and was surrounded by a lofty bamboo fence, upwards of half a mile in circuit. There were two entrances, one facing the town, and the other on the opposite or land side. At the former were three guns of large calibre, but not mounted, until the commodore, at their request, mounted one as a

pattern for them in constructing carriages for the rest. The garrison was situated on the summit of Sareebingo Hill, which rises abruptly at the back of Majunga town to the height of three or four hundred feet, and forms, by a lower continuation, a lofty and precipitous point, the north-eastern limit of the bay. From the commanding elevation of Sareebingo above the surrounding hills for some distance, it is likely to be of considerable importance in a military point of view, should Majunga ever attain such consequence as to render it expedient to fortify the town. A citadel on its summit would command the town and anchorage, as the guns of the Ovah garrison do. This circumstance, together with the apparent healthiness of the spot, directed Rahdahmah in his choice of it for the site of his garrison. At each entrance was placed a guard with arms piled; while two sentries kept patrolling about on each side of the gate, most scrupulously presenting arms to every passing officer. The officers are distinguished from the private soldiers only by carrying a sword *à la main*, instead of a musket, wearing a garment of richer pattern and materials, thrown with a studied

negligence over one shoulder, and thence passing under the opposite arm and descending in folds to the ankles; and in being covered in general with a straw hat, unless by some chance they have been enabled to procure a cocked-hat, for which, even when much worn, they will give a great price. Our seamen, aware of this predilection, procured two that were very shabby, for which defect they endeavoured to make up by decorating them in such an extraordinary manner with plates of tin, burnished brass, tassels, &c. as to overshoot their mark: they might have suited ignorant savages, but the Ovah people perceived and rejected the caricature.

Rahdahmah's troops are all disciplined and instructed in the manual exercise and in military-tactics by an Englishman residing at the capital, who in the drill terms adopts his own language. On our first arrival at Bembatooka, I was not aware of this, and was consequently much surprised, as I passed in the dusk of the evening a dark secluded corner, to hear myself challenged, in a parrot-like monotonous tone, by "Who come dere?" It startled me: however, I answered "Officer," and stopped to dis-

cover who the querist was. This I found somewhat difficult, for so fairly matched was the dark shade of the spot with the hue of the Ovah sentry, that, had not a passing light gleamed upon him, as he sat crouched on his hams and partly enshrouded in his garments, it would have been impossible to discern him.

The greater number of the Ovah soldiers have no other clothing than their native garments wrapped round their middle, and descending below their knees. The army clothing, however, annually supplied by the treaty, enables Rahdahmah to furnish a considerable body of men attached to his presence with English regimentals. Some of these accompanied him to Bembatooka, and in point of appearance equalled any European regiment that I have ever seen. An officer of artillery, of considerable experience, from the garrison of Port Louis, Mauritius, went to Madagascar to see the army of Rahdahmah; and, having afterwards, on his way home, travelled through Egypt, where he saw the troops of that government at Cairo, disciplined by French, Italian, and American officers, he wrote to his friends at Mauritius, and declared that they were much

inferior in all essentials to those he had seen belonging to Rahdahmah.

Ramineetook, the Ovah governor of Bembatooka, was rather shorter and of a darker tinge than the king, his brother, and by no means of so steady a carriage. He generally dressed in a blue coat with epaulettes, and cocked-hat; and his favourite amusement was shooting, during which he was always accompanied by a strong guard, rode on horseback, and was delighted whenever he could get an English officer to join him. His manners were particularly lively and prepossessing; and, although not endowed with such extraordinary talents as his brother, he was accounted a man of ability and a good soldier. In taking leave of Captain Vidal, for whom he manifested great partiality, he presented him with a handsome cotton garment, woven for him by one of his sisters: for the princesses of Ovah, like many of those of ancient times, take great pride in weaving garments for those connected with them by marriage or the nearer ties of consanguinity.

CHAPTER V.

Tananarivoo, the capital of Rahdahmah.—Military discipline.—Ovah boys.—Rahdahmah's Visit to the Andromache.—Leave Bembatooka Bay.—Majambo Bay.—Arab method of jerking beef.—Arab and Malegasch Tombs.—Narreenda Bay.—Luza River.—Macaucoes.—Passandava Bay.—Peak of Matoula.—Malegasch coffins.—West Minow Islands.—The Barracouta quits Madagascar for Mombas.

I COULD gain but little information respecting Tananarivoo, the capital of the kingdom of Ovah: even its exact site is not determined; although I have the best authority for stating that it is situated nearly west of Tamatave, on the ridge of mountains that run along the centre of Madagascar like a spine; and its distance from the sea-coast in a direct line is computed to be about seventy-five leagues. It is of considerable extent; and the houses of the higher class are constructed with far superior elegance to those in other parts of Madagascar.

The furniture also is much better; and since the connexion with the English, a great improvement has taken place in this particular. Chairs and chests of drawers are the most favourite articles; and probably in a short time there will scarcely be a house without them. Even the soldiers of Rahdahmah's army showed their partiality for chairs, by purchasing them in great numbers, cumbersome as they were, from the Americans at Bembatooka; and, in the decorating of their huts in the garrison, these constituted their greatest pride.

Notwithstanding the devastating wars which have lasted so many years, the population of the kingdom of Ovah continues to be immense, and to furnish multitudes, who, without receiving pay for their services, affectionately follow their prince, and assist to pave his way to the unlimited sovereignty of the island. Those who composed Rahdahmah's army had brought with them a quantity of silver chains, which served them as the current coin; and it was amusing enough to observe them, when bartering with one another or the natives, detaching small fragments or separate links, and, previous to paying them away or receiving

articles in exchange, carefully ascertaining their value by a small pair of copper scales, which few soldiers I believe are without. The chains are manufactured at Tananarivoo, and do great credit to the ingenuity of the people. Those of gold are beautifully executed; as are also some of their garments of silk, exquisitely worked with threads of the finest dyes, and for which they demand a high price in dollars.

The population of Ovah consists of Mulattoes and Blacks, the former of whom appear to be considered superior; though Rahdahmah is anxious to do away with that distinction, which, if encouraged, must inevitably sooner or later tend to produce civil war. It was on this account that Mr. Hastie, when presenting the Ovah lads to Captain Vidal, to be trained up as seamen, earnestly requested that no distinction on account of colour should be made or permitted among them. They were habited in the becoming costume of their country, and were apparently from fifteen to eighteen years of age. They were fine intelligent-looking young men, and, like the rest of the people of Ovah, were more graceful than athletic, possessed a pleasing expression of countenance, and

a handsome turn of features, for which those of the darkest dye were not less remarkable than the others. The conduct of these young men won the warmest approbation of the officers: mild, docile, and attentive to command, they manifested such good sense and integrity that they could be entrusted in any situation. As seamen they were emulous and active; and, in the fifteen months which they passed with us, made great progress as sailmakers and carpenters; but, from the constant occupation of all on board in the furtherance of the survey, they did not attain such proficiency in reading and writing as they otherwise would have done. For this backwardness they made ample amends after their removal to the Owen Glendower frigate, at the Cape, where leisure and means combined to assist them. Although so mild and obedient, yet with our seamen they maintained a conduct that gained them respect, and suppressed satirical observations on their colour or nation, to which they would by no means submit; and on one occasion, where there was a probability of our having recourse to force with the Portuguese of Delagoa, (as will be hereafter related,) they evinced the

utmost satisfaction at the opportunity for displaying their national courage.

Some years ago, the London Missionary Society sent out to Ovah, under the sanction and influence of Sir R. Farquhar, four missionaries, for the religious instruction of the people, and three artisan missionaries for the introduction of the most necessary arts. Two of the former and one of the latter have since died of the fever, and their families have suffered severely. The survivors, to whom great praise is due for their persevering industry, still reside in Ovah, and continue to fulfil the end for which they were sent out. The minister missionaries have at present (May 1825) upwards of two thousand pupils, and their seminaries have already furnished many valuable officers for the service of Rahdahmah, both military and civil.

The day after the interview between the commodore and Rahdahmah, the latter, accompanied by his brother, Mr. Hastie, and several of the chiefs, repaired on board the Andromache to dine. He was received with a salute and a guard, and, as he had never yet visited so large a ship, he appeared lost in admiration as

he walked round her decks. Nothing escaped his observation; and his remarks, if they were not pertinent and profound, were at least accounted so.

The commodore, in conversing with Rahdahmah, strongly impressed on his mind how admirably his island was situated, and how well adapted, from its numerous harbours, for the purposes of commerce. "You want but vessels," continued he, "seamen to navigate them, and trade will follow of course.* Although I cannot supply you with the first, with the second I possibly may, if you give me but the means. Let me have a few of your young men; they shall be distributed among the squadron under my orders, and if they fail to learn at least something it must be their own fault." Rahdahmah approved the proposal, and with gratitude accepted it. "A navy you would soon have, and, believe me, nothing would yield me greater pleasure than to pay my respects to the Prince of Madagascar on the

* The commerce of the east coast of Madagascar in grain, bullocks, and cloth, is already considerable; but, as it is exported in foreign bottoms, the gain of the Malegasch is, comparatively speaking, small.

quarter-deck of a frigate of his own." Rahdahmah half rose from his seat; his ecstasy at the idea was too great for utterance: it glistened in his expressive eye—it flushed on his cheek—he held his head down, as if wrapped in a pleasing reverie, and whined and rubbed his hands, as if unconscious of what he was doing.

The commodore and Mr. Hastie held a long conversation with him respecting his future operations, the management of duties, regulations for the encouragement of trade and manufactures, the treatment of subdued tribes, and other important affairs, in which their experience and knowledge were superior to that which he could possibly possess. Nor was this advice uncalled for, as Rahdahmah's sole object in appointing to meet the commodore at Bembatooka was that he might avail himself of the benefit of his counsel and experience.

Exhilarated by the reception and treatment he had experienced, he determined to put in practice a little piece of raillery, in return for an instance that his people had given him of their solicitude and anxiety for his safety; and, although he at first pretended to be annoyed

at their presumption, and sent word back to that effect, yet he must have felt pleased that the English were witnesses of the circumstance. A deputation came off about sun-set with a letter. Rahdahmah stopped too long; they were becoming alarmed, and thought that it was time for him to return on shore. "Send them back instantly," said the prince. "Tell them that Rahdahmah is not pleased, and will return to-night or not as it suits his pleasure." Soon afterwards he quitted the frigate, playfully observing to the commodore: "Now I will play these gentlemen of mine a trick; I will take a roundabout way, and will land some distance from the place where I embarked. They expect me there, and my guard will be waiting to receive me. But no, conducted by yours I will pass them unobserved—will arrive at the garrison, and there will tell them, 'A pretty set you are to pretend to be anxious on my account, and yet allow me to land unnoticed, and to return to my garrison escorted by a guard of those very people in whose hands you would have me think you are really afraid to trust me.'"

On the following morning, Rahdahmah, with

his retinue, guard, and band, returned to the camp, whither the commodore and suite followed in three days, to be present at a grand kaabah.

The camp was pitched at Maranvoney, on a tributary stream of the Betsibooka, about twenty miles from the head of Bembatooka Bay, into which the river empties itself. We did not await their return; but, on the 31st of July, sailed to complete the small extent of coast to Boyana Bay, that had not hitherto been surveyed. There were two rivers, each affording capacious harbours. Off the northern, termed Makumba, lies an island of the same name, almost connected by sandy flats with the main.

It is of inconsiderable size, but very lofty, and presents in every quarter a vast precipice, excepting in one small spot, where a deep rent in the rock admits of a dangerous pass to the summit. One of our midshipmen ascended with great difficulty for the purpose of obtaining angles. He found the top a perfect level, and on it the ruins of two small buildings. These certainly had not been erected by the Malegasch, although they might have been built by the Arabs: yet even that was very

doubtful; for the superiority of their construction was such that, had we any account of the Portuguese ever having formed a settlement there, we should immediately attribute them to persons of that nation. The island was evidently volcanic, and the numerous dark caverns were thickly inhabited by bats, not much inferior in size to the vampire, measuring about two feet and a half from the tip of one wing to that of the other. These animals, when our seamen first entered their abodes, rushed forth in a body on the wing, and, flitting about in the depths of the caverns, made a great noise, which the nature of the place tended to increase, and startled the intruders, who, not expecting to find any living creature there, could not at first account for the uproar.

It is worthy of remark, that in Boyana Bay, as well as the two rivers between it and Bembatooka, the natives were timid and distrustful in the extreme, and could never be prevailed on to approach us.

After completing the survey, we stopped one day at Majunga, and then passed on to Majambo Bay, the south-western point of which is situated in latitude 16° 11′ 40″ south, and longitude 46°

east. It is almost a fac-simile of Bembatooka, being of about the same dimensions, of nearly the same form, having the same extraordinary channel of deep water in the centre, and terminating like the other in a number of rivers at its head. In a small bay, in its upper division, we found anchored an Arab dow, the crew of which were employed in jerking beef, though in a very different manner from that pursued by the Americans. The meat is cured without salt: it is carefully separated from the bones, cut into long narrow ribands, and then suspended in the air from branches of trees, or bamboo frame-work, erected for that purpose, until it becomes hard and perfectly dry. The hide serves for the package, and sustains no damage from being applied to that purpose. It is thus prepared. As soon as the animal is killed, a hole is dug in a dry sandy spot; the hide is carefully spread over it, and the edge secured around by wooden pegs, while the hollow, loaded with sand, conforms itself to the shape of the cavity beneath. In this the slips of beef, prepared as above noticed, are placed while hot, from having been but just parboiled in their own fat, which is afterwards poured

over them in a liquid state. Sufficient time is then allowed for it to cool, after which the pegs are withdrawn, and the edges of the hide brought together and laced by thongs cut from a green one. The whole thus packed is nearly of the shape of a large sack, contains the meat of four bullocks, and weighs from twelve to fourteen hundred weight. The Arabs affirm that the beef thus prepared will remain sweet for two years, and even when the parboiling and the application of liquid fat are omitted, it will keep for many months. The preparation of the hide for the latter method is also dispensed with. The jerking of the meat in this manner is however more tedious than the process adopted by the Americans, as the time required by the one to dry their meat is considerably abridged through the use of salt by the latter.

Majambo Bay appears to have been anciently inhabited by Arabs, as their tombs are still in existence on the summit of the small island of Manza, situated near the narrow. Trees are incorporatèd with them; they are blackened by age, and fast mouldering to decay. On an insulated, yet verdant rocky mass, scarcely se-

parated from the shore, at the entrance of the bay, I saw for the first time the tomb of a Malegasch. The grave had been filled up after the interment of the body by huge misshapen stones, over which was spread a low shed of rocky slabs. The earth around was strewed with the bones of oxen, probably slain either as an offering or for a burial-feast. There were also some sticks stuck up, with small streamers of blue and white cloth pendent from them, and a China coffee-cup, carefully propped up.

Leaving Majambo on the 20th of August 1824, we proceeded to Narreenda Bay, which, as well as Passandava, differs from the others in being an arm of the sea, and not, like them, the floodgate of rivers. Mormoona, on the west point, is in latitude 14° 40′ south, and longitude 47° east. The bay runs in for twenty-six miles, and carried to its head a decreasing breadth of from nine to five. It is bounded in most parts, like that of Majambo, by steep lofty hills, ending at places in a low intervening flat, but more generally in cliffs. The whole has a very fertile appearance, and exhibits a variety which presents a striking and

pleasing contrast with the dull sameness of low mangrove-covered land, extending from the head of the bay as far as the eye can reach, narrow in its limits, and bounded on either side by lofty hills. The islands at the north entrance of Narreenda afford excellent harbours, and are approachable in most directions, close to the shore.

Sancasse, the largest of them, is inhabited, and in great part covered with verdure; as is also Souhee, a stupendous inaccessible rock, upwards of two hundred feet high. They are both volcanic. In the course of the survey, I had to ascend a hill on the former, which I found in great part composed of a curious kind of stones, resembling petrified oyster-shells. The river Luza, after forming an extensive lagoon eight miles inland, discharges its waters into the sea opposite to the island, through a channel, which, on account of its extreme narrowness, the amazing depth of water in it, often more than fifty fathoms, and the picturesque scenery of the lofty and precipitous hills on either side, is highly interesting. When the schooner was passing in, some natives who had ascended one of these heights that almost over-

look the channel, appeared like pigmies; and, had they felt a disposition to hostility, they might have indulged it with safety to themselves, and yet considerable damage to those below.

It was at Narreenda that we at first obtained a view of the stupendous peak of Mataoula, towering with many more mountainous summits of less elevation over the lofty, yet comparatively low, intervening hills. The natives were less shy than we found them to the southward of Bembatooka, so that, on the first and second day of our arrival, we had already commenced a friendly intercourse with them, which probably would have increased, had not an unfortunate mistake occurred and broken it off. It arose from their discharging musketry at midnight, in celebration of some festivity, which we construed into an attack on our boats, absent at the time, with the exception of two, which were immediately armed and despatched to the rescue of the others. On arriving off the village whence the firing proceeded, the crews found canoes on the lagoon, the natives up, and lights in their houses; facts which, owing to the lateness of the hour, appeared to corroborate the suspicions entertained.

It was soon perceived, however, that the alarm was groundless, but unfortunately not before our boats had opened fire on the canoes, which retreated panic-struck to the village, whence an old man sallied forth, when our people landed, and discharged a musket at them, evidently, from the lowness of the report, unshotted.

While surveying along the cliff-bound eastern shore of the bay, I put into a small sandy inlet, where I found the rotten furniture and shattered remains of a dow, that appeared to have been wrecked there some years ago. The rocks were in the vicinity covered with logs of sandal-wood, of an inferior kind, which probably had constituted her cargo, and, as one or two stacks of these remained close by untouched, I should imagine she had not completed her lading when she was lost. Close to the same spot an abundant spring of excellent water issued from the side of the cliff, and afforded, by its facility of approach, a most favourable opportunity to the schooner and us to complete our water, of which we did not fail to avail ourselves.

Along this part of the bay the trees were covered at times by a beautiful variety of ma-

caucoes (*Lemur catta*). They were small and delicately proportioned, and, with the exception of the belly, rings round the tail, and a broader one encircling the neck, which were of a snow white, the rest of their coat was of the darkest jet. I saw many, as I passed along, playing their gambols among the branches of the trees that hung drooping from the edge of the precipice above. It was a pretty sight to watch the graceful manner in which these animals, as if formed by nature to please, sprung through the air from bough to bough, accomplishing the most fearful leaps with the utmost facility.

After leaving Narreenda, we soon came to a group of lofty volcanic islands, which, in honour of Rahdahmah, were designated in our charts after his name. The islands themselves were laid down, but the two bays and the extensive river at the back appear to have been unknown; at all events, they were left unnoticed in the charts. We afterwards passed the two inconsiderable islets of Bermahomey, and on the 16th of September anchored off the high conical rock of Keyvoondza, situated, with two or three more islets, off the west point of

Passandava Bay, which is the broadest and deepest of those on the west coast of Madagascar; and by means of the islets already noticed, and the large and magnificent ones which skirt its eastern entrance, it affords the finest harbours imaginable. The inhabitants apparently differ from the rest of the Malegasch in no respect but in their language.

The village of Passandava, situated at the head of the bay, consisted of a few half-ruinous huts, principally occupied by the small Ovah garrison that Rahdahmah had placed there. From the swampy nature of the ground, and the exposure to which these troops were subjected, they had suffered greatly from the fever. The commandant was one of those who were yet labouring under the effects of the disease, from which, most likely, he did not recover. Although wishing to show us every civility, he could scarcely sit up to receive the purser, who visited him for the purpose of making arrangements for obtaining fresh supplies. He had the rank of major, but the straw hat and sword *à la main* were the only emblems of his authority. He wanted much to procure a cocked-hat, but no person on board had one to

spare, or at least not such a one as was worthy of his acceptance. We endeavoured to obtain our water at the village, but found it so bad that we were obliged to relinquish the attempt. We were however afterwards more fortunate, for, in the course of the examination of Mamooka harbour, formed by the island of that name, together with some smaller islands and reefs on the western coast of the bay, a running stream, well suited for our purpose, was discovered at the back of a small village.

Some of our officers amused themselves, while the watering was going on, in beating up the surrounding woods, in which they found many birds of various species, more especially wild Guinea-fowls, several of which were shot. The margin of the bay is frequented by great numbers of a large species of brown eagle, apparently subsisting chiefly on fish. These birds generally choose the overhanging branch of a lofty tree, projecting from the side of a high steep bank, in some sheltered harbour, cove, or inlet, where the uninterrupted smoothness of the transparent waters enables them more promptly and distinctly to perceive the scaly inhabitants as they gambol among the coral near the rocky

boundary, and rise at times to the surface of the water, whence they are snatched in an instant, not by the beak, but the talons of their feathered enemy. The dexterity which the eagle displays in fishing is really astonishing: he pounces down with impetuous velocity, yet so well does his keen sight measure the distance, that, immediately on reaching the water, even should he miss his prey, he arrests his headlong flight by a strong exertion of his sinewy pinions, and, scarcely wetting his talons, again soars majestically to his watch-post.

At the lofty and rather prominent point near the village of Passandava, commences the rise of the mountains surrounding the stupendous and inaccessible peak of Mataoula, which, however, lofty as it is, scarcely rises, as I have before observed, above the broader summits of its gigantic neighbours. From the variety of stupendous chasms and inaccessible steeps of which this chaotic mass is composed, it presents a grand and awful appearance. The portion that immediately fell under our inspection was evidently volcanic; and if the rest be of the same nature, how violent must have been that convulsion in the bowels of the earth which reared

so stupendous a ruin on its surface! The subterraneous exciting cause, in all probability, still remains, as earthquakes are even now felt at times; indeed, the Portuguese on the opposite coast of the main affirm that the shocks experienced there are generated in Madagascar; and, as they have had the advantage of obtaining better information than we could, who were but passing voyagers, it is to be presumed that their assertion is correct.

I know not whether metals exist in the neighbourhood, but think it probable, as in many places the rocks appeared like smelted iron ore, and, on being struck, yielded a metallic ring like basalt. Some of the islands abounded in large masses, formed of hardened earths of different colours, incorporated and stratified with quartz and basalt, or lava resembling it; and on Keyvoondza point I picked up a small fragment of asphaltum.

In the side of Ninepin Rock, adjoining the island of that name, situated in the centre of the bay, we discovered a small excavation, with a Malegasch coffin deposited in it.. This consisted of a box about four feet long, eight inches deep, and six broad; it contained the

disjointed skeleton of a grown person, which, it is reasonable to assume, must have been reduced to that state before it was placed there. It bore no marks of fire, and therefore I imagine that the body had been first inhumed and allowed to remain so until the flesh had decayed and dropped from the bones—a change which the climate would quickly accomplish. We discovered several of these bone-chests deposited in the interstices of the cliffs of Nos Salley, one of the Rahdahmah Islands.

I can hardly dismiss Passandava, without noticing the fertile appearance and picturesque scenery of Nos Beh, an island of large dimensions, lying off the eastern point of the Bay, and almost forming a continuation of it by means of the intervening island of Nos Cuba, of stupendous mountain height. It presents to the eye in every direction a pleasing display of fertile valleys and gentle acclivities, abrupt conical hills, and lofty mountains; nor is the variety less remarkable along its coast, which exhibits a succession of deep bays and inlets, most of which afford excellent ports at all times of the year. Horsburgh, in his Directory, states that this beautiful island was once colonized,

but when or by whom he does not mention. I traced it round, and minutely examined its coast, yet in no part did I perceive the vestige of a ruin, or aught else that tended to indicate that a settlement of civilized people had ever been established there. It certainly appears to be well adapted in many respects for the purpose.

We completed the survey of Passandava and its islands on the 4th of October, and then sailed for those of the West Minow group, where we arrived the same day; the schooner in the mean time bringing up the survey of the coast of the main. The West Minow group consists of an assemblage of islands, perpendicular rocks, and coral patches, amounting in all to twenty-seven. The largest of the former is termed Great Minow, and is of a peculiar shape, resembling a pair of compasses open to seaward at angles of fifty-five degrees, with one leg four miles and a half long and the other nearly eight. When at anchor among the group, you appear as if in the centre of the crater of an extinct volcano, the surrounding islands resembling so many pinnacled relics of its ancient circumference.

These islands, with the exception of two or three, which are low and of coral, are lofty, and composed of basalt columns, which, either straight or curved, generally form the precipices and bold prominent points. The columns of this kind, at the north-west extremity of the Great Minow, are particularly grand and imposing in their appearance. They are slender, perfectly straight, and about sixty feet in length; the number of their sides varies from four to six, the latter being the most general. In their arrangement, the parts of one are perfectly adapted to fit into those of another, forming altogether so compact an assemblage as to exhibit the appearance of nearly unbroken solidity. Immediately beneath this lofty precipice, a mass of curved basaltic columns rises from a depth of twelve fathoms, and leans its ponderous bulk against it.

While examining the East Minow Island, I observed for some time a glittering distant object just showing itself above the water and instantly disappearing again. On approaching, I discovered it to be a large fish of the bonito kind, about four feet long, firmly grasped in

the jaws of a common porpoise.* We pulled hastily up, and had just reached the spot, when the fish rose again, and, frightened at our sudden proximity, quitted his prey, and instantly disappeared; yet, before we could avail ourselves of our good luck, he again came up, seized the contested prize, and, with a curveting plunge, bade us a final adieu. A porpoise certainly possesses a formidable display of teeth, yet his jaw is small, and apparently weak; consequently, it appears extraordinary that he should attack such strong and ravenous fish as those of the bonito species always are.

It may not be amiss to state here, that the Pracel Bank runs from Bembatooka, and does not end until within a very few miles of Cape Ambre, the northern extremity of Madagascar. Although there generally is a great depth of water within it, yet its edge is extremely dangerous, more especially to the northward of Passandava, where it is necessary to use great caution in approaching, as it suddenly rises

* This fish, erroneously denominated porpoise by mariners, is in reality the *delphinus*, or dolphin; and that which is commonly termed the dolphin, is the *Coryphæna hippurus* of Linnæus.

from an unfathomable depth to one that no vessel of a large size could possibly pass over with safety. The task of examining this bank generally fell to the lot of the schooner; but, as our time was limited, it was not possible to render the survey of it so minute as we should otherwise have done. The space between Passandava and Cape St. Sebastian, in latitude 12° 27′ south, and longitude 48° 37′ east, includes Chimpaykee Bay, and two or three others, which, although smaller, yet afford better harbours. The land near the sea is generally low and swampy, but at a little distance inland it rises into an abrupt and mountainous ridge.

We left the East Minow on the 7th of October 1824, and proceeded to the Island of Cape St. Sebastian, which we surveyed; and, having already exceeded the duration of our intended stay at Madagascar, we sailed on the 17th for Mombas, where, according to a previous arrangement, we were to meet the Leven.

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival at Mombas.—Lieut. Reitz's Journey to the Pungahney.—His Death and Burial.—Arrival of the Leven, and Account of her Operations since parting.—Massacre of the Portuguese Garrison at Delagoa by the Natives.—Reception of Mombarouk and his Suite at the Isle of France.—Death of Messrs. Fisher and Durnford, Midshipmen.—The Leven's Survey of Madagascar, and Visit to different Islands, and to Mozambique.—Mombassian Dishonesty.—Courage.—Parental Affection.—Abstemiousness.—Cleanliness of Person.—Filth of Apparel.—Trade Allowances to the Shekh.—Condition of the Slaves.—A Marriage Procession.—Fabulous Pigmy Race.—Description of the Wannekas.

It was on the 23rd of October that we again got sight of the hills about Mombas, and, as we rapidly approached the port, we were congratulating ourselves on the pleasure we should experience, after so long a separation from the Leven, and the almost total privation of civilized society, in meeting with those who, as our comrades in the expedition, were actuated

by the same views and the same sentiments—in fact, our messmates and shipmates. Thus anxiously we watched the approach of the boat that pushed off from the shore to meet us in the offing. We scarcely needed the melancholy intelligence of the death of Lieut. Reitz, to confirm our forebodings of that catastrophe; even the hope that only a temporary illness occasioned his absence could not be entertained: there was a strange lieutenant in the boat, and no vessel in the harbour.

The object of Lieut. Reitz's visit to the Pungahney, in which undertaking he lost his life, was to view the fall of that river, which, according to report, was well worthy of observation; and as he must necessarily see much of the country and of the manners of the natives in his journey thither, he was glad of the opportunity to add something interesting to the stock of information acquired by the expedition. According to the accounts of the Arabs, the fall is three days' journey up the river, and does not exceed fourteen feet; the depth of water below it to the river's mouth is seven fathoms, but that above is not ascertained: there, however, the water is by no means shal-

low, as the rafts, (for they have no canoes,) in plying across, can obtain no bottom with the long poles which they use in ascending. A short day's journey above the fall there is an archipelago of islands, thickly inhabited; and, at some distance beyond them, is situated the town of Vooga, where dwells the Kinieure or chief of all the Wannekah tribe. At this place the people are armed with spears only, but those on the island use bows with poisoned arrows.

The rainy season commenced at Mombas, with partial showers, on the 25th of March, ten days after the south-west monsoon had set in, and continued until the 26th of April, when to all appearance it ceased. Lieut. Reitz, wishing to complete his journey before the arrival of the Leven, which he had expected rather too soon, determined to leave Mombas on the 4th of May, if the weather should continue the same. The Shekh Soleyman Ben Alli and the principal people endeavoured to persuade him to wait for a more favourable season, but without success: in all probability he attributed the remonstrances of the Arabs to their general dilatory character, and therefore thought them unworthy of attention. Accordingly, on

the arrival of the day which he had fixed, he left Mombas, followed by a suite of seventy persons, one of whom was Hamese Ben Hamed, brother to Mombarouk.

They travelled on asses, which, at Mombas, attain a large size, and are remarkably fine animals. They journeyed along the beach, or at times kept a little inland, for the sake of the shelter afforded by the villages, and the more easily to effect their passage across the creek by means of the fords: in case these should be found impassable, they had boats following them along shore, and always ready to take them over. The fair weather, which induced Lieut. Reitz to quit Mombas, was followed the very day after his departure by such torrents of rain as had not been equalled at any time within the memory of the oldest inhabitants: to these they were partly exposed in the night of the 6th, having no other place of shelter but the cavities of the rocks.

They spent the night of the 9th on the Island of Voiseen, situated at a short distance from the main. It is twelve miles in circumference, and some time since contained about one thousand inhabitants, consisting of

Soaleese and their slaves; but, in the late disturbance with Muscat, they were driven off by Seyd Labry, governor of Zanzibar, by whom, or by whose orders, they were robbed of their vessels, their property, their slaves, and even their wives and children. The island is nevertheless again inhabited; the treachery of the Wannekah tribes, of which the forefathers of the present population had melancholy experience, being more dreaded than the enmity of Muscat. Water is not to be procured on the island; and it appears from its barrenness to be merely inhabited for the purpose of trading with the Wannekahs, from whom these people obtain ivory, timber, Kaffer corn, and cassada, gum, copal, &c. The copal is of a superior quality, but not abundant; although the soil is well adapted to the cultivation of the trees, as is likewise the country to the rearing of cattle, which however are very scarce.

The party, after leaving Voiseen, passed through the Arab town of Jumbo, swam their asses over a river, and, after crossing a sandy space, thickly imprinted with the tracks of different animals and wild beasts, entered the Wannekah town of Pongue. This was far

larger than the generality of native towns, and was strongly defended, by means of a double hedge of thornbush and double gates. There were from sixty to seventy huts, and the population apparently amounted to seven hundred. The women were better dressed, the men better armed, than those of other towns; and the regularity observed far surpassed what they had hitherto witnessed. When Lieut. Reitz and his party first approached, they were refused admittance; but, as soon as their object was explained, they were received with apparent pleasure. Cocoa-nuts were given to them to eat, and mats were spread for them to sit upon. In the evening, a dance was got up, in which two separate sets exhibited at the same time; one, consisting of old and middle-aged men, some of whom had assisted in the defence of Pemba, danced to songs descriptive of the deeds of Mombarouk. The other set was composed of the young men and women, forming a large ring, the girls on one side and the men on the other. They continued their amusement till near daylight, and by the noise which they made, chased welcome sleep from the

weary eyelids of the travellers. The fence around the town was principally planted to keep off the Quavas, a distinct tribe of the Wannekahs, who at times are in the habit of quitting their native inland territory in great numbers to plunder the more peaceable inhabibitants of the sea-coast.

In the afternoon of the 15th, the party arrived at a small village called Macoomba, where, not finding their boats as they expected, the greater number, whose asses were completely tired out, and who themselves were suffering from fever, remained; while Lieutenant Reitz and a few of the stoutest made their way, in a small native boat, to the Island of Tanga, to which it was found that their boats had gone by mistake. In their way, they had a providential escape: torrents of rain overtook them, and, when the weather cleared up, they discovered that, instead of steering for the island, they had stood directly out to sea, and were already at such a distance that they could scarcely discern the land.

The Island of Tanga, two miles in circumference, is situated about one hundred and

fifty fathoms from the main. The population at present scarcely exceeds three hundred, but some time ago it was far greater; for, before the harassing attacks on the coast by the Imaun's forces, Tanga was a more considerable mart for ivory than Mombas or any other place in the vicinity. Now, however, the inhabitants are reduced to the utmost poverty, subsisting entirely on fish, and a sparing supply of Kaffer corn from the interior. Around the few trees that grow on the island, the convolvulus entwines itself, yielding a sort of caoutchouc, or India-rubber, which is collected only by the children, who amuse themselves with it in producing a report like that of a pistol. They make an incision in the bark, and, as the juice exudes, collect it in a leaf, where it is left, until in a short time it begins to acquire a resinous quality: it is then moulded with the fingers into the shape of a tube, with one end closed, and into the other they introduce a reed, through which the caoutchouc is blown into a globe, of the size of a bullock's bladder. When this is struck with force it bursts, and yields the desired report. School-

boys in England often amuse themselves by producing a similar report, chewed India-rubber furnishing the materials.

Lieutenant Reitz was rejoined at Tanga by those of his suite who were left sick at Macoomba; and, on the 19th, the party proceeded to the town of Tangōlla, situated within five miles of the limits of the Mombas territory. Here, as in the other towns, although the pasturage was good, cattle were scarce. The people were obliged, during the night, to keep the few goats, sheep, and poultry, which they possessed, in huts elevated on long poles about ten feet above the ground, to preserve them from the tigers.

Early next morning, Lieutenant Reitz started from this place for Pungahney Bay, in an open boat, much against the advice of the Arabs, who wished him to wait till evening, when the wind would be fair, and the sea less rough. He was anxious to get thither, and therefore determined at once to make the attempt, during the torrents of rain that were falling; he finally succeeded after a most fatiguing pull of nine hours, but the boats which accompanied him were obliged to put back.

The two pilots he had with him proved of no service, and in vain did the crew toil to enter the river against the ebb-tide, strengthened as it was by the accumulated supply from the inland floods. One Arab dropped from his oar from fatigue, and could not be prevailed upon to rise again. In the darkness of the night, about nine o'clock, a shower of rain falling at the time, the attention of all was suddenly aroused by the loud roaring of heavy breakers close to them; and on these it was evident that the boat was drifting fast. Fortunately they had a good anchor, which, in spite of the rapidity of the tide, held them secure during the night; yet they were in constant dread of the huge trees, which, floating down the river, threatened them from time to time with destruction. During this night of anxiety, several muskets were heard at no great distance from them, and light was observed in the same direction: these were supposed at the time to be signals made by a boat coming to their assistance; but, when the day dawned, it was discovered that they proceeded from a small vessel wrecked during the night within one hundred and fifty yards of them. She and

her cargo were totally lost, but fortunately none of the crew perished. In the morning the wind considerably abated, and, favoured by it, Lieutenant Reitz found no difficulty in entering the river.

The Bay of Pungahney, into which this river empties itself, is of no considerable extent, and is in great part choked up by sandbanks and reefs. The land on either side rises into high hills, but more especially to the southward, where, opposite to the entrance of the river, which is scarcely more than one hundred fathoms across, a lofty and perpendicular bluff extends itself, and hangs in towering majesty over the small and humble village of Whaney. On the other side, the point is formed by a low and narrow sandy ridge, on which, amid a grove of cocoa-nut trees, stands the town of Pungahney. There, during the last night, the inhabitants were too much engrossed by their own distress, to pay attention to the signals of the stranded dow. The accumulated water of the river formed another channel through the centre of the huts, and in its progress swept away many of them; the others the inhabitants quickly took down, and convey-

ed piecemeal to a higher situation, where they re-erected them. This mishaps was, however, trifling, when compared with that which occurred in the village of Whaney. The rain had so moistened the lofty cliffs above as to detach from its greatest height a huge mass, which overwhelmed and buried in its fall five huts and fourteen of their unfortunate inmates.

Lieutenant Reitz's notes of his operations terminate at the place where, the day after his arrival (May 24th), he was seized by the fever. The disorder assumed from the first an appearance so virulent, that, on the second day after he was attacked, it was considered necessary to return with him immediately, as the only means of saving his life. He grew rapidly worse, and at eight o'clock on the morning of the 29th, just as they hove in sight of Mombas, he expired in a most awful state of raving delirium. For the interment of the remains of this much-lamented officer, the interior of the ancient Portuguese cathedral was chosen. A grave seven feet in depth was dug near a ruinous piece of masonry, which alone indicated where the altar had once stood. The

corpse, decently arrayed in fine cambric, was conveyed to the cathedral, followed by a procession of the first people in the town, and accompanied by the greater portion of the lower order. The funeral service was read, and the body consigned to the earth with military honours. An humble specimen of Arab masonry, plastered over and whitewashed, marks the spot.

Lieutenant Reitz was in his twenty-second year when he died. He was a good musician, and with this acquirement possessed an uncommon share of wit and good-humour, united with a pleasing address and a frankness of manner that endeared him to us all, as it did likewise to the Arabs, who ever afterwards spoke of him in terms of the highest respect, and of regret for his untimely fate.

In the September following this melancholy affair, Commodore Nourse arrived at Mombas, and appointed two midshipmen, named Emery and Wilson, to act as lieutenants, one in the place of Lieutenant Reitz at Mombas, and the other on board the Leven. In the mean time two of the Leven's seamen, left at the place, had died, and all excepting Mr. Phillips had suffered from the fever.

One of the principal stipulations on the part of the English, when taking possession of Mombas, was the abolition of the slave-trade. A short time after the death of Lieutenant Reitz, a dow concerned in that contraband traffic was seized and confiscated by Mr. Phillips; yet not without occasioning a great sensation among the Arabs, who strove hard to obtain restitution of the property, promising not to transgress again. Mr. Phillips, however, very properly refused to comply, and the Arabs were obliged to submit, although with a very bad grace. When the English establishment was first formed on the island, the venerable descendant of the princes of Melinda presented them with a shamba or plantation opposite to the town, on the main, from which, after a little trouble, they managed to supply themselves with every species of vegetable that the island afforded. The redeemed slaves were landed there, and comfortable huts erected for their accommodation. The greater part were in a diseased state, from which, however, all but two or three in a short time recovered, through humane attention, aided by the medical skill of Mr. Adamson, an assistant-surgeon left by

the commodore for the Leven. When we arrived, this little Negro settlement exhibited a picture of perfect content. To each had been allotted a portion of the shamba, the produce of which, together with other supplies, supported them in a way far superior to what they were accustomed to.

At daylight, on the 2nd of November, the Leven was discerned in the offing. She had approached pretty close, when the wind failed her; and, as it was likely that she would at least be delayed some time, Capt. Vidal and Lieut. W. Mudge went out to pay their respects to Capt. Owen. The ship, in the mean time, was swept by the current to the northward, at a great rate; so that, when the boat reached her, she was so far down that there was no chance of fetching the port otherwise than by standing out to sea, beyond the influence of the current, and there beating up. It took her six days to regain what the failure of wind for three hours had lost her: a circumstance which demonstrates the necessity for keeping well to windward of the port, so that by the time the sea-breeze sets in, about noon, the

vessel may not be swept too far down to benefit by it.

I shall now turn back, and give a slight sketch of the Leven's operations since our leaving Mozambique together on the 4th of September. After a tedious beat of fourteen days she reached Delagoa bay, where, in working up to the anchorage off the Portuguese Fort, she struck on Shefean Reef, but fortunately did not stick fast, or receive any damage from the shock. As she approached the Fort, the Portuguese flag was observed to be only half-mast high, in consequence, as it was soon afterwards ascertained of the massacre of the governor, his captain Senhor Terceira, and twenty-five of the soldiers, by the natives. The circumstances which led to this catastrophe, and which were communicated to Capt. Owen partly by Senhor Maximiano, the acting governor, were the following:—

A quantity of ivory arrived from the interior, escorted by about two thousand Blacks, who, for their sustenance, brought a large herd of cattle, of which they daily consumed seven. With a view to monopolize this rich supply,

Senhor Lopez wished to form an establishment on the road by which they entered; but one of the native kings refused to permit this, and in consequence hostilities commenced.

At first, the firearms of the Portuguese prevailed over the assagays of the natives, and soon obliged them to shun the unequal conflict. Had they been content with this result, it is possible that retributive justice for that and various acts of cruelty and oppression might even now not have overtaken them; but they knew not where to stop. They usurped a lordly sway, and, even after the territory was conquered, and the inhabitants had ceased to resist, plunder was encouraged. Irritated to frenzy by such deeds, the natives, seeing that open force was no longer of avail, quietly awaited an opportunity of avenging themselves, when their enemies, elated by success, should be found off their guard. The governor was absent; an ambuscade was formed, and he and his party fell the first victims. After this success, the conquerors, with their king at their head, proceeded to attack the Fort; which however Terceira, who had succeeded to the command, attempted not to defend with his

small remnant of a garrison. The assailants entered, and by the leniency which they displayed in scarcely plundering at all, and by their forbearance towards the surviving Portuguese, they showed that in their operations they had not been actuated by an insatiable revenge. This disposition Terceira, with a policy conformable to his situation, took care to encourage by small presents from time to time, and by trading exclusively with them; a preference which gave great umbrage to the Temby people, who being much more powerful than the others, attacked and overcame them, and consequently wrested from them the command of the Portuguese market. The Temby people had a strong enmity to Terceira, for a reason, which I shall presently relate, and determined forthwith to murder him, and to make the Ensign Maximiano governor in his stead. Accordingly, this unfortunate man, who had just risen from a sick bed, was taking a little exercise one day in walking under the walls of the Fort, when he was pierced through the body with a spear by a Temby man, and fell dead on the spot. His fate excited in all of us the deepest regret; his kind attentions

to Lieut. Owen and his suffering men having been such as demanded our warmest gratitude.

The enmity of the Temby people originated in the following circumstance:—Terceira had formed a connexion with a woman belonging to the Temby side, who some time before, while she was in the country, died in child-birth. Though it was well known that Terceira entertained the sincerest affection for her, yet her death was attributed by her friends to his conjuration and treachery; and so firm was their persuasion on this point, that they even called a council of the chief men upon the subject. Terceira heard of the circumstance, but he felt too proud to attempt to remove the impression against him, to which impolitic conduct he in all probability owed his death.

Commodore Nourse, when he was at Delagoa, erected a flag on the Temby side, and hoisted the British jack upon it; but, soon after the Leven quitted, in September 1823, Senhor Lopez took it down, at the same time observing sundry formalities, with a view to shield himself from severe responsibility for the insult offered to our nation. He went

over to the Temby side, accompanied by the master of a Portuguese brig, who had arrived shortly before, one or two officers, and a party of armed soldiers. On his arrival, he proceeded to the residence of King Maietta, who, intimidated by his show of force, denied that he had ever ceded any part of his territory to the English. The farce and form of written question and answer succeeded. The document was made to state just what the governor pleased; it was signed by witnesses; the British flag was forthwith superseded by that of Portugal, and two sentries left to prevent any one from taking it down. Captain Owen, however, on his arrival, obliged Senhor Maximiano to remove it.

A short time before the decease of Senhor Lopez, an English seaman died of the fever at Delagoa, where he and a boy had been accidentally left by a whaler. The English lad was sick; the Portuguese, therefore, buried the corpse, but, through idleness or an unfeeling indifference, interred it so little below the surface of the sand, that, in a day or two, the dogs, attracted by the smell, drew it forth by the head and devoured it. By the time the Leven

arrived, the boy was reduced by reiterated attacks of the fever to a state of mental imbecility, from which nothing could arouse him.

The Leven merely stopped at Delagoa sufficiently long to rate her chronometers afresh, and then sailed for the Isle of France, where she arrived on the 21st of May. The Ariadne was the only vessel lying there, but two days afterwards Commodore Nourse came in, in the Andromache. Mombarouk landed, and was received with a salute and guard of honour. A house was assigned by the governor, Sir Lowry Cole, for the accommodation of himself and his suite, and every attention that was considered due to his rank was strictly paid to him. A consultation respecting Mombas took place between the governor, Commodore Nourse, and Captain Owen; and the result was, that they deemed it advisable to suffer matters to remain in the same state in which they had been left by the latter officer, until the various documents respecting them should reach the government at home, and its decision on the subject should be known.

The Arabs, who had never visited any other places than those inhabited by their own coun-

trymen or sect, were much pleased with the novelty afforded by their sojourn at the Isle of France. The beauty of the women, and the liberty they enjoyed, especially engaged their attention, as did also the performances at the theatre. The principal actress there possessed, together with pleasing manners and a graceful form, a face by no means devoid of beauty; all which was so heightened by stage effect that the rough soldier Mombarouk himself was subdued into a most ardent admirer. As the Leven had to undergo various repairs, which would detain her some time, Mombarouk and his suite were conveyed back to Mombas in the Wizard, colonial brig.

I should have mentioned that, shortly after the Leven quitted Delagoa, one of the midshipmen, Mr. Fisher, died of a complaint in his legs, which he contracted while in the Barracouta. Two of our invalids for England likewise died, and at the Isle of France the sickness which prevailed on board the Leven was very distressing: several were invalided home; many suffered much after they quitted; and it led to the death of a midshipman, Mr. E. P. Durnford, whose loss we much felt in the sur-

veying operations: this event occurred on the 15th of July, after the Leven quitted the Isle of France. She then commenced the survey of the east coast of Madagascar, in latitude 19° 17′ 5″, and carried it down to the northward of that island, in the course of which she critically examined Diego Suariez Bay, for such I suppose it to be: the charts, though they state the existence of this bay, do not point out its precise situation. Captain Owen named it British Sound, an honour to which it is well entitled, on account of its superior excellence as a port. A narrow entrance conducts into an extensive basin, from which branch off four different harbours, each capable of containing the largest fleet. The land around rises into high ridges and lofty mountains of volcanic formation, with fertile slopes beneath, on which innumerable wild cattle may be at times perceived grazing. The natives, who were not numerous, appeared to be in a very barbarous state; yet, from the few opportunities which they have of intercourse with Whites, they manifested great anxiety to avail themselves of the Leven's appearance to obtain trinkets or other manufactured articles in exchange for refreshments.

After quitting Madagascar, the Leven called off the small coral islet of Astore, passed by the Cosmoledo Islands, and, on the 28th of September, anchored at the Island of Johanna. There she remained long enough to obtain refreshments and to complete her water, and then repaired to Mozambique, where she heard of the melancholy fate of the Senna party, and obtained their effects. From Mozambique she stood over and looked at the Chesterfield Islands, passed those of Glorioso, Assumption, Allabaa, Pemba, and finally, as before mentioned, arrived at Mombas on the 2nd of November 1824.

The long stay which we made this time at Mombas gave us a farther insight into the character of the Mombas Arabs, which left an impression not altogether favourable. The Koran is their law, and by it they affect to square their conduct; yet power ever overcomes right, more especially when one of the Banyans, of whom there are many in the place, is concerned: helpless and unprotected, he is obliged to submit to be swindled out of his property by the chief men, and consequently to make up for the loss by exorbitant charges in

his dealings with persons of the lower class, who therefore are eventually the sufferers. If an Arab of the higher order wishes to procure goods from a Banyan, and has not money to pay the price, he immediately demands them on credit; and as he frequently, though possessing the means, has no intention of paying for them, the transaction is, generally speaking, tantamount to a theft, against which no appeal will avail, especially as the oath of the Banyans will not be received, unless taken in the presence of blood, a thing utterly abhorrent to their stern superstitions.

This test of truth is perfectly Arab. They cunningly strive by an outward show of justice to cover the dishonesty of their proceedings, and if possible to reconcile them to their consciences. How thin is the veil of hypocrisy! It is but adding insult to oppression; for they well know that a Banyan would rather lose his life than submit to the test, so averse are these Hindoos to the sight of blood. One who was employed under Mr. Phillips, at the Custom-house, could never be prevailed upon to approach it, until the practice of slaughtering a bullock for our use, at a short distance from it,

was relinquished. If the Banyans refused to bow to power and to give credit, they were generally imprisoned; not after we took possession of the place, for then a stop was put to such proceedings, and to others equally dishonest.

An instance of intended fraud occurred a few days after Lieutenant Reitz set out for Pungahney. A merchant, named Mohammed Ben Nassar, had, three months before, obtained of another, called Ali Ben Juena, sundry bags containing beads, valued at a certain number of dollars, the greatest part of which was paid on the spot. There was no fraud whatever on the side of Ben Nassar, as the bags, previously to the sale, were opened by him, and their contents examined and approved by Juena; yet this latter, contrary to the faith of a merchant, refused to conclude the bargain, when, from the market being overglutted with beads, they fell much below the price which he had agreed to pay. He was supported in his conduct by his kinsman, Raschid Ben Salim, the most opulent man in Mombas, who, by his influence and power, thought to frighten Nassar into acquiescence, but could not accomplish his object. Mr. Phillips interfered, as did several Arabs,

and the affair was finally settled in favour of Nassar—a decision which was approved by the Shekh.

The system of borrowing money without any probability of being able to return it is among the vices of the Mombas people: even Mombarouk, notwithstanding his lofty aspiring character, was guilty of it in more instances than one. The Arabs are so partial to going about armed, that boys may be seen parading the streets with sabres by their sides and creeses in their girdles. A complaint was made to Lieutenant Reitz against one of these, of the age of fifteen, related to the Shekh, for striking an aged Banyan with his sword, and severely cutting his head. The offence, had it been committed before the English took possession of the place, would have been punished merely by a short imprisonment; but Lieutenant Reitz entertained very different notions of justice: although great intercessions were made, the culprit was flogged, imprisoned, obliged to pay ten dollars to the Banyan, and debarred from carrying a sword, until by his future conduct it should appear that he might be trusted with one.

Having thus related a few examples not favourable to the character of the Mombas people, I shall do them the justice they deserve, by stating in what points they excel. That they possess bravery, the repeated struggles which they have made for liberty fully prove: the following circumstance is in a slight degree of the same quality, and likewise shows that their word may sometimes at least be strictly relied on. The owner of the slaves who were seized by Mr. Phillips determined, if possible, to regain possession of them: accordingly he arranged with some Soallese to seize them in their huts, and to carry them off with such expedition and address that the circumstance might be made to appear to the English as the act of some marauding Wannekahs. The time, however, was ill chosen; the cries of the Negroes were heard, and the boats of the two vessels were immediately despatched to their rescue and to seize the aggressors. They, however, arrived too late for the latter purpose, as the Soallese had already retreated, excepting one, who was seized by the Negroes while attempting to escape, and delivered into the hands of an Arab chief, who reached the spot a little before our boats. This

chief probably had some idea of what was about to take place; for, as soon as the outcries of the Negroes were heard, he pledged his word to Mr. Emery, with whom he was conversing at the time, to seize the perpetrators, if possible, and bring them to him. He was just leaving the shore with his prisoner, in order to deliver him to Mr. Emery, when one of our lieutenants approached, and demanded him in Captain Owen's name, not knowing at the time the engagement which the Arab was under. A refusal was the result; the demand was repeated, and the same answer given. The officer prepared to execute by force the orders which he had received; and the Arabs, equally prompt, drew their swords and creeses,' and seemed determined to oppose him.

Their conduct on this occasion, considering the responsibility which they incurred by opposing that authority under which they were so peculiarly placed, and especially when they were by far the weaker party, proves that the native courage which they possessed, and which had rendered them respected along the coast, is ever on the alert, and will break out at times, even when, from policy, if for no other reason,

it should be restrained. After a long struggle the prisoner was taken away, and conveyed on board the Leven. Next day, the chief was summoned to appear at the council, to answer for his conduct. He readily acknowledged that he had acted wrong; but stated that, having pledged his word to seize the delinquents, if possible, and deliver them to Lieut. Emery, his anger at the moment, when he found himself opposed, impelled him to pursue a conduct which he certainly felt to be improper. It is almost needless to observe that no farther notice was taken of the affair.

The affection of the Mombas people for their children is very great, and, although they are in consequence very indulgent to them, the behaviour of the children in return is dutiful in the extreme. They are instructed with great care in reading and writing, and in order that they may at the same time acquire a sufficient knowledge of their religion, sentences from the Koran are adapted as their task. The parents appear to take great care as far as regards the morals of the young; yet they are not kept long enough under restraint, but left to their own guidance at an age when they are most

likely to receive bad impressions. Some few Arabs, when in company with those of another religion, will freely indulge in the use of wine; but, in general, they will either not touch it at all, or at least very seldom. They appeared, however, to make an exception in favour of the liqueurs at the Isle of France, which they all drank with avidity, not excepting even the strict Mombarouk himself.

The Arabs are very cleanly in their persons. In the morning they strip and wash themselves all over. They also perform their ablutions before and after meals, and wash hands, feet, and mouth before they go to prayers, which they say five times a day. The wealthy are attended once a week by a barber, who shaves their heads and armpits, pares their finger and toe nails, and dresses their moustaches. He is paid at the rate of a dollar a year. Poor people obtain his good offices gratis, through the intercession of his employers. Although the Arabs are so particular in regard to their persons, yet they are seldom cleanly in their clothing; for their turbans and cotton robes are sometimes worn a month, and their woollen ones a year, without being washed. They are

often covered with vermin, which they do not appear to consider a disgrace; for we have known them, when conversing with an English officer, pick them off, and, with the utmost indifference, beg to know the insect's name in English.

At the small village of Jof, situated a few miles from Mombas, an annual fair is held in the month of August, at which ivory and cattle are the principal articles for sale, being brought from the interior by a tribe termed Meric Mungoans, who purchase them from the elephant-hunters for beads and brass wire. These are the only articles they will take in exchange; and they are so fastidious, that, however inconsiderable may be the value of the articles which they bring to exchange, they will neither take in return the wire without the beads, nor the beads without the wire, but insist upon having a little of each. The interpreters purchase first on their own account, and afterwards sell to the Arabs; yet, as they are subject to imposition in their dealings with the Wannekahs, in whose territory Jof is situated, they seldom clear more than five per cent. by the transaction. Independently of this established market, a con-

tinual trade is carried on with the Wanmekahs in ivory, rhinoceros horns and hide for shields, gum copal, and various sorts of grain, yet the amount altogether, for want of encouragement and energy on the part of the Arabs, is so small, that sixty thousand dollars' worth of goods will overstock the market for six or eight months. Raschid Ben Salim, their richest merchant, is supposed not to possess a greater capital than twenty-five thousand dollars. The vicinity of Melinda abounds in ivory, and if the Arabs could only conciliate the good-will of the Gallah, they might soon obtain by an establishment there a most lucrative trade. The Gallah, aware that such a settlement would prove beneficial to them as well as to the Arabs, some time ago made proposals to that effect; but the latter, fearful of treachery, declined the offer.

The office of Shekh is considered hereditary, yet the succession has very often been diverted from the regular line by the caballing ambition of a younger brother or other persons belonging to the family. The Shekh has for his support various allowances and privileges, the most considerable of which was the first choice of imported ivory. This was stopped by Lieut.

Reitz, who, however, allowed him to purchase ivory free of duty; but after all the Shekh could gain but little, as the demands upon him were very great. On his elevation to the rank, he was obliged to distribute twelve thousand dollars in equal shares among the twelve different classes or tribes that reside on the Mombas territory. The present Shekh, however, was unable, on account of the war with Muscat, either to bestow this gratuity, or to pay for the lime used in erecting the town wall, and to supply the workmen with provisions. Every child, at its birth, received its first covering as a gift from him; every bride, at her wedding, was presented with a gown-piece at his expense, and the friends of a deceased Soallee with four fathoms of cloth as a winding-sheet for the corpse. Wannekahs, who visited Mombas on public business, were subsisted by the Shekh; and the feasts of Ramazan and El Hy were given at his cost. To meet such demands as these, his allowances were inadequate during the late struggle; and the consequence was that, prior to the arrival of the English, commerce, the Banyans, and the poor were oppressed by the very authority that should have

supported them. The late Shekh, when he died, owed the Banyans twelve thousand dollars, and the present imprisoned one who refused to deal with him on credit.

The condition of the Arab slave is highly creditable to the humanity of the Mombassians: very often they cannot be distinguished by dress or familiarity from their masters, who dislike to inflict upon them any sort of punishment, more especially corporeal, than which they consider that a more debasing or cruel insult cannot be offered to a human being. On this point they are themselves so particular that even the English custom of slapping on the shoulder to gain attention often gave offence.

Lieutenant Reitz had occasion to witness the ceremonies performed on the first and third day at a marriage among persons of the higher class. A procession was held, consisting of about fifty men followed by as many women; they walked slowly along through the streets, the married and free women being enveloped by large cloths, held over them by slaves and attendants, while the men performed a variety of evolutions with their swords drawn. In the splen-

dour of the procession of the third and last day they consider themselves unrivalled by any other town along the coast. Lieutenant Reitz had a commanding view of it from his house. The advanced party consisted of twelve women, with shaved heads, painted yellow, and necks and faces regularly striped with red and white. They moved to and fro in a running pace, and kept flourishing plaited grass fans about, in order to clear a way for the procession to pass through the immense crowd that was assembled. Next to this party came another similar female guard, with the addition of six boys in front, dancing to their singing. The procession was headed by a band consisting of six large kettle-drums, to the beating of which the Arabs, who followed with their drawn swords, kept regular time in singing, going through a slow dance resembling a minuet, waving their swords, and every now and then vibrating them in unison from the hilt to the point. After these appeared a tall man clothed in white, with a large white sheet thrown over all excepting his arms; his head was decorated with ostrich feathers, and he was mounted on the shoulders of another man equally tall, with

his feet dangling down in front. His office was to keep continually spreading out his arms to their full length and closing them again, rolling at the same time from side to side, so as often to overbalance his bearer, who however had three supporters at each hand to keep him from falling. There were also on either side six girls mounted on the shoulders of tall men; they had their heads shaved and painted, and their faces spotted all over. They carried fans, which they dexterously used in refreshing their bearers, as they rolled from side to side. Next followed the married and free women, with all but their feet hidden from sight by means of a large piece of cloth held over them by their slaves. Their ankles were encircled by several brass bangles, the chain-like appearance of which to a stranger's view would seem emblematic of the little liberty which they enjoyed. Lastly followed a crowd of about sixty women of all classes, who chose to paint themselves for the occasion. Their loud shrill screeching was most discordant, and only surpassed by that which they are accustomed to make over the body of a deceased friend or relative.

The Arabs of Mombas and the Soallese are

very superstitious. If a woman is taken with a fit, it is considered that the evil spirit is upon her, and charms of all sorts are forthwith employed to expel it. Extracts from the Koran are considered as highly efficacious in these cases, as also whispering in the ear. Another approved remedy is to procure twenty or thirty people to dance in a circle round the patient, while she, when the fit is past, stands in the centre, tossing her head about in a most extraordinary manner. Prayers are sung, and for seven nights running this ceremony is repeated.

If an infant has a sudden turn of the eye, or cries much at night, these effects are supposed to be caused by the owl, who is considered to be particularly inimical to children.

The Banyans residing at Mombas send during the favourable monsoon a small quantity of ivory to Bombay, and bring back in return East India and English manufactures. On shipping the first article of the cargo, they observe a particular ceremony, firing guns, beating drums, and distributing rice and Indian corn among the poor or any other persons who choose to accept the gift.

The language of the Soallese and that of

the Wannekahs are totally different; the latter is spoken from three to six degrees south latitude. Immediately inland of the Wannekahs reside the Meric Mungoans, who likewise speak a different language. In their country there is much ivory, and the Arabs prefer the iron which they bring for sale to that of Sweden. These people state that in one district between their country and that of the Wannekahs there is a pigmy race of people who scarcely attain the height of three feet: they call them Mberikimo, and affirm the fact of their existence with many protestations of veracity. They assert that the journey from Mombas to that country would take six weeks.

Excepting the Chinese and the Hottentots, I have seen no people who in their features indicate so completely the tribe or nation to which they belong as the Wannekahs. Their eyelids are closed with a sleepy expression, yet the eye itself indicates a savage, treacherous, revengeful disposition, combined with a cautious suspicion, whose watchfulness is ever on the alert. In their transactions with the Arabs, as soon as they have obtained articles in exchange for those which they bring, they pay

their devoirs to the toddy, until they become most brutally intoxicated, in which state it is not uncommon to meet them staggering against the houses and rolling along the streets, exciting the supreme contempt of the Arabs: these, as they are generally very abstemious themselves, are not sparing of their remarks on others, who, professing a different faith, indulge in excesses forbidden by their religion.

CHAPTER VII.

Departure from Mombas.—Arrival off Juba.—Description of the Islands between it and Guieux Bay.—Arab and Portuguese Ruins.—The Ship loses two Anchors.—Proceeds to Lamo for wood to make an Anchor.—Its Construction.—Return to Mombas.—Death of Mr. Williams.—The Leven visits Magadoxo and Brava.—Arab Hospitality at Mombas.—Soallese Dance.—Leave Mombas.—Partial Currents.—The Islet of Alphonze.—Arrival at the Seychelles.—Description of those Islands, and of the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants.—Coco de Mar.

On the 2nd of December 1824, we left Mombas, in company with the Leven and Albatross, in order to undertake jointly the survey of the labyrinth of rocks and islands contained between Juba, a town of degenerate Arabs and Soallese, situated in latitude 15′ 33″ south, and longitude 42° 29′ 54″ east, and Guieux Bay. We were ordered to make the best of our way thither, and the Albatross received the same directions; but Captain Owen,

in the Leven, intended, previously to joining us, to examine more critically than he had yet done the coast contained between Juba and Magadoxo* to the northward, a distance of two hundred and fourteen miles.

We entered into north latitude on the 8th, and two days after made the land, about fifty miles to the windward of Juba. The coast presented a most sterile appearance, being composed of an uninterrupted series of sand-hills and mounts of scorched red earth, rising to the height of one hundred feet or more above the surface of the sea. The vegetation was confined to a few tufts of dry grass and some low stunted bushes, among which, though very seldom, the remarkable mimosa-tree presented itself.

We commenced our survey where we fetched in, and, running to the southward, anchored off Juba on the evening of the 11th. It was at this place that his Majesty's ship Leopard, while on her voyage to the Red Sea, in December 1798, lost a lieutenant and the greater part of a boat's crew. The natives, availing themselves

* This name is pronounced by the Arabs Mākaŏdĭsha, and is so spelt in the Leven's charts by Captain Owen.

of the opportunity afforded by the boat having been unfortunately swamped, while attempting to communicate with them, massacred all who came within their reach, excepting two, whom they detained as prisoners for some months, till a ransom was paid for their release. A boat belonging to his Majesty's ship Dædalus was likewise attacked on the same day, and two or three of her crew killed. It was Captain Owen's wish that we should hold a communication with these people if it could be done with safety, and for that purpose we took on board a Mombassian, with letters to the chief; but the weather turned out so unfavourable that we could neither enter the small river which runs past the place, nor effect a landing on the shore without imminent danger of being upset; in which case, although there was another boat in attendance, the surf beat so high that the crew of the swamped one would probably be thrown into the hands of a people of whose murderous disposition so melancholy an example was on record. It is probable, now that the English name is better known along the coast than it was, that the people of Juba would not show the same hostile disposition as for-

merly: however, as the Mombassian himself appeared to dread a meeting with them, it was thought better not to sacrifice our time by what after all might prove a vain endeavour to obtain it. This man afterwards avowed that even he could not safely communicate with them; but, as they are known to carry on a trade with the Arabs on the coast, his assertion is not likely to be correct.

Juba is a large walled town, and in the style of its buildings perfectly Arab: it is situated about a mile inland, on the summit of a lofty hill, composed of dry reddish earth and sand. Many similar hills also surround it on all sides, except immediately facing the sea. It is very difficult to make out the entrance of the river; yet its course inland, as it washes the skirts of the town, and winds among the neighbouring hills, was plainly seen from our mast-head, over the low intervening sandy space. It exhibited a smooth unruffled surface, and on it were several dows.

In the course of our survey of the islands, we were not joined either by the Leven or the Albatross, as had been previously arranged: the former succeeded in reaching the spot when

it was too late; but the current ran so strong to the southward as to baffle every attempt made by the latter to beat up against it. Deprived of the assistance of these two vessels, our survey became a very arduous duty, more especially on account of the rough weather, to the full effects of which we were exposed, and by which, notwithstanding all our precautions, we lost two out of our three anchors. The islands, and such of the rocks as are never covered, amount to nearly five hundred; ten of which are from two miles and a half to four and three-quarters in length, many upwards of one, but by far the greater number of inconsiderable size, rising abruptly from and overhanging narrow lines of reefs, detached from the main, and often dry at low water. They sometimes lie in two ridges parallel to the shore, but generally only in one. In two places alone they extend to the distance of three miles from the shore, but in others seldom more than half as much. About two miles or more outside of all, and on the edge of soundings, there is in most places a coral reef, having in some parts only three fathoms' water on it. This circumstance necessarily renders the approach

to the coast extremely dangerous for large vessels, as the Dædalus frigate experienced near Juba: she struck on the reef, and narrowly escaped shipwreck. Notwithstanding the perils attending the navigation along this part during the south-east monsoon, it is fortunate that a vessel, if she loses her anchors, may always, from the direction of the wind, lie clear of the shore; otherwise, in the whole extent of these islands and rocks, a distance of one hundred and fifty-four miles, there is but one port to which at all times of tide a vessel of large burden could retreat. This is at the entrance of the river in latitude 1° 13′ 23″ south, and longitude 41° 50′ 24″ east. It is named Durnford River. The channel which communicates with it passes between two coral islets not a cable's length apart.

I ascended and surveyed the river for seven miles. The country around appeared capable of the highest cultivation, varying from a light red soil to a dark fine mould; and if there is such a thing in this part of Africa as a river whose vicinity is healthy, this appears to be the one. A low rocky cliff bounds its limits; its flats are coral or sand, and the mangrove is

scarce. There were two villages on the south shore, off one of which, about three miles up, I anchored. A projecting rocky point hung towering above us, and on it after a short time four of the natives appeared. They were perfectly black, of large stature and stout athletic make, and had nothing to cover them but a small dirty piece of cloth wrapped round their loins. They were armed with bows and arrows, appeared very jealous of us, and, though we used gestures of amity towards them, they motioned us impatiently to be gone. We were informed that the whole coast was inhabited by Gallah: those whom I saw must therefore have been of that tribe. They are reputed to be of the same ferocious disposition as those already described, and consequently cannot be trusted.

Many of the islands are inhabited by Soallese, who, it is said, were originally runaway slaves: they adopt the Arab costume and Mohammedan faith; and, from what we observed in the little communication we had with them, they appeared to be a very docile, tractable people. They trade in a slight degree with the Gallah, but seem to entertain a great dread of

them; we nevertheless found in two or three spots some Soallese settled on the main.

Besides the river above mentioned, there are two others equally large and deep inside, but with a shallow entrance: one is termed Shamba, and the other Toola; the latter lying immediately inside of the large island of that name. On either bank of these we found the ruinous relics of the old Portuguese, consisting of chapels, castellated buildings, and factorial residences. We met also with many in other parts along the coast, yet neither in number nor age were they to be compared with the mouldering tombs, tottering obelisks, and other buildings of the ancient Arab inhabitants; these lined the coast for many miles, and served as melancholy testimonies of the devastations of the Portuguese, of the futility of their views in committing them, and of the unsparing hand of Time, which eventually shrouds in oblivion the proudest actions of man, and levels with the dust alike friend and foe. Full of the idea of advancing the cause of the Cross, and thus promoting civilization, they destroyed every germ of the latter that fell in their way, and left a double wreck behind. The barbarous Gallah,

whose rude and lowly hut exhibits a striking contrast with the proud mansions of the dead around it, is now the sole proprietor of a territory, which, had it been allowed to remain as the Portuguese first found it, would, in all probability, have risen by this time to great importance. The Mohammedan religion would have prevailed, and with it its intolerance; yet even that is far preferable to the spectacle of a fine country comparatively speaking forsaken, and running to a desert.

In the course of our survey, at one place an Arab obelisk surmounting a tomb was used as an object. I proceeded to it to take angles, and well knowing the Gallah character, I determined to guard against their treachery by mounting sentries on the tops of the ruins around me; yet, notwithstanding this precaution, the spot being covered with jungle, I found myself suddenly interrupted in my occupation by two Gallah, armed with circular shields of hide and long slender spears, the iron heads of which were at least eighteen inches in length and in a high state of polish. An alarm was given, and in an instant the savages found themselves surrounded by six or seven

men with muskets in their hands. They appeared much frightened, and hastily walked off into the thickest part of the wood.

The islets are always very narrow in proportion to their length, some so much so that natural archways are formed entirely through by means of the communication of the indent on one side with that on the other. They are crowned, excepting the mere rocks, with low bushes and stunted grass, on which the Soallese feed their bullocks and sheep in equal security from the Gallah and from wild beasts. Good fresh water cannot be procured at any of the islands, yet the inhabitants drink such as the larger ones afford by digging, which we found on trial to be both dirty and brackish.

The reefs of the islands, as well as those of other places we have visited along the coast, abound in a species of conger eel, probably of the same sort as those found by Captain Cook at Palmerston Island. It is in appearance a most disgusting fish; when disturbed it rears itself up, and, extending its jaws, armed with long pointed fangs, fixes on you its bright vindictive eye in a determined threatening gaze. Its size is the only thing that prevents its

being truly formidable; the largest I ever saw was little more than three feet in length. These eels are generally speckled white on a dark brown ground.

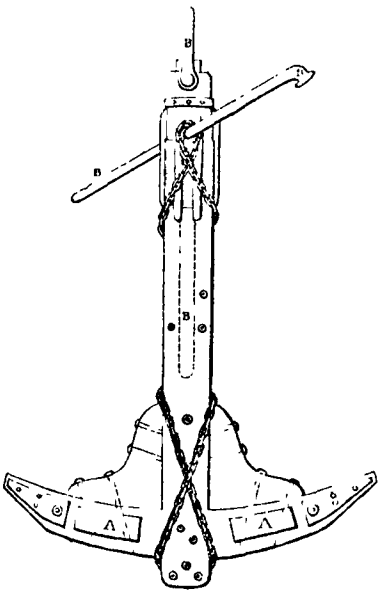
Our survey, which was trigonometrically conducted, and with such care that I really believe not a rock which showed itself above water even at low tide was omitted, took us altogether twenty-three days, not including the time we lost by being obliged to repair to Lamo, to procure wood to make an anchor, without which we could never have continued on a coast where the weather was constantly so rough. It was on the 7th of January 1825, that, in attempting to weigh, we lost our second anchor, and next morning sailed for Lamo, where, favoured by a strong breeze, we arrived in a few hours, and immediately despatched a boat to examine some large trees that we had remarked during our former visit to the place. They were of the mangrove species, some of them rising to the height of more than seventy feet, and generally about one and a half in diameter. On examination they were discovered to be excellently adapted for our purpose, being of uncommon hardness, extremely tough,

and possessing a specific gravity far greater than that of water, besides affording knees well adapted in size to form the large ones requisite to attach the arms of the anchor more firmly to the shank. The fatigue which we experienced in procuring these trees was painful in the extreme; for even by a small creek that ran some way up through the mangroves, we could only approach them by a little less than a quarter of a mile—a distance that would have been of no importance but for the black muddy swamp and impervious bushes which caused it to be almost impassable.

This swamp was partially overflowed at high water, and at all times of so soft a nature that we often sank into it above our knees. At that depth the mud was of so adhesive a nature as to render it difficult to keep our shoes on; and, when they came off, the many shells embedded in it inflicted painful lacerations on the feet. Considering that the layer of mud was only three or four feet in thickness, for at that depth it rested on a solid mass of rock, the arrangement which Nature has made to support such lofty and heavy trees on apparently so frail a foundation is truly astonishing. Their trunks are

generally elevated about eight feet, and rest on forty or fifty roots, diverging from them in radii, and striking into the mud at the distance of eight feet or more, and there separately branching off into other roots that almost form a net-work of supporters in the slimy foundation.

The expedient of a wooden anchor is one that few would adopt; but in our case it was necessary to do so, or to quit the Juba Islands with scarcely a probability of ever being enabled to complete the survey of them—an alternative to which every one on board interested in the duty felt averse, as it would necessarily create a blank, and the only one in the examination of that portion of the east coast allotted to us. We well knew that the Chinese junks, some of which exceed one thousand tons burden, use anchors formed of wood; and, taking his hint from them, Captain Vidal drew out a plan, and had an anchor constructed from it under his own inspection, which never failed us even in the severest weather that we afterwards experienced. A delineation of it is annexed, on the scale of a quarter of an inch to a foot.



A Two pigs of ballast.

B The stock, ring, and part of the shank of the iron anchor; that portion of the latter represented by dots passed down the centre of the wooden shank.

It took us three days and a half to procure the wood for this anchor, with the greater part of our crew, and upwards of a week more, while beating back to the islands, to make it; for unfortunately almost all our artificers, of whom we had a great number on leaving Eng-

land, perished from the fever at Delagoa, having been there particularly exposed to it, while repairing the boats on shore, before the insalubrity of the place was known.

The Island of Kaitou abounds in game: Lieutenant Johnes and Dr. Guland landed on it with their guns, and in a very short time returned with several birds of different species, a small springbock, and a large serpent of the boa constrictor kind, which they suddenly encountered while walking through the jungle. When first seen it was scarcely five yards distant, and, either frightened or irritated at being disturbed, shot a vindictive glare from its bright eyes, and assumed a menacing attitude, as if preparing to spring on Dr. Guland, who happened to be foremost. Before the reptile had time to make the attack, the Doctor lodged the contents of his gun in its head: the wound was mortal, and, after lashing with its tail the surrounding bushes and grass for a few minutes, the serpent expired. It measured twelve feet in length, and in the thickest part of its body was nine inches in circumference. About halfway down, there was a short space distended far beyond the general size, evidently by some-

thing large which it had gorged. On examination, a young springbock, about the size of a cat, was extracted, in a perfect state excepting a small portion of the head, on which the digestive powers of the huge reptile had begun to act.

The last time the Doctor visited the island, he encountered a crocodile, about eight feet in length: the animal was frightened, and retreated one way, while Dr. Guland, whose piece was charged only with small shot, availed himself of the opportunity to run off in the opposite direction.

On the 30th of January we returned to Mombas, where we found the Leven. Since we parted, she had succeeded after a long beat in making the coast to windward of Magadoxo, in latitude 2° 50′ north, having previously called at the Seychelles, where she left Mr. Williams, one of her midshipmen, who was dangerously ill of the fever, under the care of a French medical gentleman, named Paupinal, residing on the Island of Mahé, where he died two days afterwards. In running down towards Magadoxo, the land assumed the same appearance as that which I have described to the northward

of Juba, but was rendered much more dangerous by the immediate vicinity of the coral patches, shoals, and reefs along it, to the edge of soundings.

On the 12th of January she anchored off Magadoxo, close to a reef that affords inside a tolerable shelter to the few dows which trade there. It is situated in latitude 2° 2′ north, and longitude 45° 15′ 30″ east, and is divided into two towns, both built of coral, in the Arab style. The western appears to be the most ancient, and is closer built than the other. On the brow of the hill, which rises at the back, there are many tombs, some of which are fast mouldering to decay. Two that crown the summit of the height present a very imposing appearance, as does also a pillar erected between the towns, about seventy feet in height, and apparently solid, and a lofty tower resembling a light-house, situated on the top of an eminence half a mile to the eastward.

The hills about Magadoxo rise to the height of two hundred feet or more, and are composed of sand, with here and there a few scattered and stunted bushes on the surface. Captain

Owen wished to communicate with the Shekh, and sent Lieutenant Owen, with three or four of the Mombas Arabs, on shore for that purpose; but it would seem that the people of the town were alarmed at the arrival of the Leven, and, as soon as the lieutenant landed, he was conveyed under a guard to a house, where he was detained, evidently as a prisoner, for upwards of two hours, and after all was not admitted to an interview with the Shekh. The Arabs who were with him became alarmed, and it was considered advisable to return on board, instead of uselessly attempting to allay the fears of the inhabitants, who appeared determined to apprehend that something was in agitation against them, although they knew not what. This conduct can only be accounted for by the little intercourse which they have with strangers.

On the return of Lieutenant Owen, the Leven weighed, and proceeded to the southward, passing at the distance of seven leagues from Magadoxo a double town of stone buildings, and two leagues farther another, surrounded by a number of small circular huts, resem-

bling beehives. She passed the town of Marka, and afterwards a large village of huts, and on the evening of the 14th anchored off Brava.

This town is situated in latitude 1° 7′ 30″ north, and longitude 43° 57′ 30″ east, and is erected at the foot of a hill composed of sand and red earth. The houses are formed of blocks of coral, cemented together by mud, and generally have two stories: they are wretchedly built, and worse furnished. These are occupied only by the Arabs and the most wealthy of the inhabitants; the rest live in small huts built around the town in great numbers and very close together, some of them being circular and others square. The former appear to be most commodious, having one apartment about eighteen feet in diameter, the only opening being a small door two feet wide and five high.

The reception which the Leven experienced at Brava was far different from that which she encountered at Magadoxo. The Shekh and everyone else were extremely friendly in their conduct towards those who landed, and by their request the British flag was hoisted, and the place taken under the protection of the English by Captain Owen, until the pleasure of

the government at home should be known. The Leven touched afterwards at Lamo, where she found the Albatross, which had been vainly attempting to get to windward. They remained there two days in company, and then proceeded together to Mombas, where they arrived on the afternoon of the 19th of January.

Eight days afterwards, the Albatross was despatched to survey the African Islands, situated at a short distance from the Seychelles. Before her departure, she was hauled on shore, and her bottom repaired. At the commencement of this operation the Arabs collected about her in great numbers, for it was a novel sight to them, as few of them had seen so large a vessel, or at least one of her build, in the like situation. In a short time the crowd was so great that the carpenters found it difficult to prosecute their work. Sentries were placed, and limits assigned to the approach of the crowd; yet this precaution was unvailing, for they were not to be kept back without force, which, considering that their object was curiosity alone, was out of the question. In this dilemma, Lieutenant Mudge ordered the sow over as a guard: she was a host in herself; the

Arabs shrunk back from the contaminating contact, and the workmen proceeded at their leisure. The Leven assisted us in watering and in taking provisions on board, and on the 7th of February we sailed for the Seychelles, intending to touch at the island of Pemba and Zanzibar in our way.

Each time that the Leven was at Mombas, the Arabs daily sent off for Captain Owen's table three or four dishes of rice, prepared in different ways, and often also to the brig. They individually gave repeated entertainments, to which the officers of both vessels without exception were invited, and to those who could not attend, the dishes as they left the table were immediately sent on board—an act of attention and kindness on their part, which, as it showed the general feeling towards the English, was ever duly appreciated. As a mark of respect, some of the principal men made a point every day, but more especially in the evening, of waiting on Lieutenant Emery, whose time was consequently so much broken in upon, that at last it became necessary to give a hint that the omission of this compliment, unless at stated times, would be agreeable.

On moonlight nights there is far more noise at Mombas than during the day, as the Soallese then hold their dances, commencing as the sun goes down, and often continuing them until daylight. They appear to adopt no particular figure in their evolutions or style of performance, but exhibit together in a confused mass, to the tattoo of a large and small drum, and to the deep though not very loud note of a sort of gong, of metallic composition. The Arab women generally look on, and after a little time will often join in the dance. I once observed them performing by themselves in a ring, with a minuet-step; yet, even during this their only recreation, they are so enshrouded that it is impossible to make out their faces, and scarcely their form.

I was present, with several more officers, at a Soallese dance held in a large house, according to Lieut. Emery's arrangement, expressly that we might see it. Although, as I have just stated, no particular steps or figure seemed to be adopted, yet the performance was not altogether inelegant: we joined in it several times, and with the women, who alone were dancers, came in for our share of the donation of diluted cocoa-nut milk, which from time to time was

liberally bestowed over the heads of the performers, through the medium of a sort of pewter coffee-pot, with a long and slender spout.

We often observed that the cats were covered with a short and stiff coat of hair instead of fur. We supposed them to be of a different species from those in England, and never imagined that the change from the ship to the shore would effect so extraordinary an alteration. A cat which we had brought from Algoa Bay, and which had all along retained the same appearance as at first, was landed at Mombas before we quitted it the last time; and, on our return, a period of only eight weeks, she was completely altered in appearance, having parted with her sandy-coloured fur, and gained in return a coat of stiff short hair of a pure white.

On the 5th of February we bade a final adieu, with many a hearty shake of the hand, to our Arab friends of Mombas; and, as we passed through the narrows in going out, returned the salute of the crowd assembled on the castle battlements to take a last view of us. Our passage to the Seychelles was very tedious, on account of the prevalence of light and contrary winds. The currents that we encountered were very

extraordinary. Nearly every day we passed through several, but more especially on the 9th, in latitude 7° 52′ south, and longitude 43° 28′ east, where we counted at times as many as four; their waters apparently passing in opposite directions, and their limits being indicated by lines of noisy ripplings. It may be hazardous to advance an opinion respecting the cause of those currents; yet my idea at the time I viewed them was, and still is, that they are occasioned by lofty submarine mountains, whose towering peaks of many angles present a sudden opposition to that constant state of undulatory motion, however trifling it may be, that is generally allowed to prevail in the ocean. As an argument in favour of the existence of such submarine mountains in those seas, I may confidently refer to the innumerable small islets and reefs which there rise abruptly from an unfathomable depth.

We passed the three coral islets of Alphonse, St. Francois, and Bijoutier, and, on the 30th of March, anchored at the Island of Mahé, the principal of the Seychelles group, where we found his Majesty's ships Leven and Ariadne;

the former having, since we parted, visited Zanzibar and Pemba. The Seychelles, or Mahé Islands, were first partially explored by M. Lazarus Picault, in 1743, by order of Mahé de la Bourdonnais, then governor of the Isle of France. In all probability they were known to the Portuguese previously to that time, although I have not seen any work which confirms the conjecture.

The navigators of that nation, however, were certainly acquainted with the Amirantes; but, as the islands at present designated by that name are low, sandy, sterile, and altogether insignificant, it is not likely that they would have bestowed on them so high-sounding a title as Admiral's Islands, when, at the distance of only eighty miles, there is the lofty and beautiful archipelago of the Seychelles, which, allowing geographers to be correct in assuming the identity of the present Amirantes with those mentioned by the Portuguese, they could scarcely have avoided seeing, especially when proceeding from the latter to the East Indies. It would indeed appear, that if the Seychelles were known to the Portuguese, they could not have critically examined them, otherwise they

must have discovered the trees of the Coco de Mar. The origin of the name of Mahé is evident; that of Seychelles, which is now in general use, was derived from M. Morande de Seychelles, a principal officer in the French East India service, at the time that the islands were, as I have already mentioned, partially explored. This archipelago rests on an extensive bank of sand and coral, which entirely surrounds it: it consists altogether of more than thirty islands, large and small, but only fifteen are of importance from their size or produce: the names of these, with the number of acres contained in each, are as follows:—

Islands.	Acres.	Islands.	Acres.
Mahé . .	30,000	Cerf . . .	400
Praslin . .	8,000	Frégate . .	300
Silhouette . .	5,700	Marianne . .	250
La Digue . .	2,000	Denis . . .	200
Curieuse . .	1,000	Vacher . .	200
Félicité . .	800	Aride . . .	150
St. Anne . .	500	Conception . .	120
North Island .	500		

About the year 1768, the French formed a colony on the Island of Mahé, which since that time has been gradually increasing and extending to the other islands, all the largest of which are inhabited.

The return given in the population of the whole in January 1825 is as follows: — 582 white persons; 323 free people of colour; 6058 slaves; forming a total of 6963 souls. At the same time their live stock amounted to five hundred and three head of horned cattle, and six hundred and sixty-one sheep, besides hogs, goats, and poultry in abundance. The Island of Mahé, the principal of the Seychelles, and the residence of the government agent, is sixteen miles long, and from three to five broad. Through the length of its centre passes a range of stupendous and rugged mountains of granite, the loftiest of which, whose summit is generally enveloped in clouds, apparently rises upwards of three hundred feet above the surface of the sea, yet it is somewhat exceeded in height by the peak of Silhouette. Throughout the island there is much valuable wood, more especially on the higher ground, which has not been cleared for cultivation to the same extent as the rest; yet but one forest exists, and that has been so much thinned of late years as scarcely to merit the appellation. The town of Mahé is situated on the north-east side of the island, in a small glen: it is of trifling extent,

and is irregularly built, containing only a few good houses, and as few inhabitants of respectability, who chiefly prefer living in the environs. The buildings are constructed of wood, in the French style. The portion of the general population that this island alone contains is 5327, of whom 456 are Whites, 238 people of colour and free, and 4633 slaves.

The laws are administered by a judge of the peace and *greffier*. The court is styled a 'Tribunal de la Paix,' and was organised by the French chief judge at the Mauritius, by order of the Governor-general Decaen, bearing date September 23rd, 1806. Two *suppléants* are appointed to assist the judge, and to act as his substitutes, when from sickness or other causes he cannot attend. A later order of General Decaen's sanctions the assembling of a special court for the trial of slaves, of which the agent is president, and five of the principal inhabitants are members. Their sentence is carried into execution in less than twenty-four hours.

The Seychelles capitulated to the English so early as 1794, after which their flag was always respected by our men-of-war, in consequence of the neutral line of conduct adopted by the in-

habitants, and the very politic and conciliatory address of the French commandant, M. de Quency. This capitulation was renewed in 1806, by Captain Ferrier, of His Majesty's ship Albion; and, on the capture of the Mauritius, the Seychelles were formally taken possession of, an agent was appointed, and they were made a dependency of that colony.

The principal occupation of the inhabitants is agriculture; and their produce, consisting of cotton, spices, coffee, tobacco, maize, rice, and cocoa-nut oil, is conveyed to the Mauritius and the India market by the numerous small vessels belonging to the island, which trade affords employment to many of their youth.

Independently of the productions above enumerated, they export exclusively to the Mauritius, wood, wax, tortoiseshell, &c. The merchandise brought back in return is retailed from the shops, which generally belong to the principal inhabitants, but are kept by deputy.

Though the attempt to escape from slavery is regarded as a capital offence, yet desertions often take place, insomuch that we could never ascertain to whom the slaves belonged that we picked up at sea, as I have already

related. It is an extraordinary fact, that the proprietors of the slaves, now that they are so dear and so difficult to be obtained, should pursue the same line of conduct respecting them as they did when they were both numerous and cheap, and not take any measures for their multiplication. It is not uncommon to observe only one or two women among twenty or thirty male slaves employed in cultivating an island. I shall never forget the impatient tosses of the head and angry looks displayed by a—lady—when the above subject was canvassed. "A negro, a paltry negro, ever understand or conform to the social tie of wedlock! No, never! never!" Yet this lady was an Englishwoman.

It is this privation of female society that disgusts the slaves and impels them to desert, though they are well aware that death is the penalty if they are detected in the mere attempt.

Lieutenant Cole, of the Staff Corps, from whom I obtained much information, thus describes the inhabitants of the Seychelles:—

"The white proprietors are principally from the Islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, and,

from the frequent intercourse which exists with the latter island, retain the same manners and customs, in which it must be understood that they are essentially French, but without the restlessness, impatience, and fire which distinguish the European Frenchman.

"Hospitality, and strong parental and filial affections, are among their leading virtues; whilst a want of all public spirit, indolence, and ignorance, are equally remarkable. They are Roman Catholics in name, but in truth profess no religion. In society there is little or no distinction of class beyond that of colour; those who are the most wealthy or intelligent are regarded as important personages; but all alike frequent the same entertainment, as they are nearly all allied by the ties of affinity and consanguinity. Cards, billiards, and dancing are their amusements: of the former the men are passionately fond, and the women are devoted to the latter."

The hospitality and attention that we received from the inhabitants of Mahé were very great. Scarcely a day passed during our short stay without our being invited to a dinner-party and a dance, from which superfluous

form and etiquette appeared as completely banished as festivity and mirth were encouraged, especially at the house of Dr. Paupinal. There everything was interesting, from the neatness and taste displayed in the domestic economy, the laying out of the gardens, and the botanical collection, to the arrangement of the picturesque wilds around, and the exhibition of their different varieties of slopes, steeps, precipices, and torrents, in the best points of view, from the various walks and arbours. At the head of his table he displayed the liveliness of the French character, combined with the hospitable, frank, open deportment of the English gentleman.

M. de Quency, the late French commandant of the Seychelles, and to whom the inhabitants are much indebted for the lenity with which they were treated during the war by the English, was still living in Mahé, at the advanced age of upwards of eighty years. At a party at his house, Captain Owen, who knew him before, and had been one of the auditors of his admirable address above mentioned, paid him a very handsome compliment upon it. The old man was so overpowered by the unexpected

and gratifying allusion to a subject on which he justly prided himself, that he burst into tears. He was a knight of the order of St. Louis, and in his younger days had been page to the king. In his carriage and demeanour he was a perfect Frenchman of the old school, wearing the little *demi en militaire* hat, and adopting the precise old minuet-step carriage, which sometimes indicate an odd mixture of grace and pride—a man who contemns a stranger, and despises everything except the skill of his antiquated *valet de chambre* and the honour of *la grande nation.*

The ladies of Mahé are graceful and pleasing in their manners, and by no means deficient in beauty, when young, especially those not of the richest, residing at the back of the island, who are reported to be particularly interesting. Marriages, nevertheless, often turn out unhappy, for chastity is not among their prominent virtues, and so little is thought of the breach of the marriage vow, that *divorcées* are admitted into the same society as the most prudent and exemplary wives.

Large families are very common, and, as many persons attain a great age, it is not unusual

to see four generations seated at the same table, and forming a very numerous party. This argues well for the climate, and the testimony of those who know it declare it to be excellent; yet a stranger visiting the island at the time of the year that we did (March), would be inclined to draw a wrong conclusion. I never experienced either on the coast or anywhere else such a sensation of heat as at the Seychelles. The thermometer varied from 84° to 64°, and its mean was from 70° to 72°; but I should have judged from my feelings that the index had stood at 90° or higher.

As nearly all the French gentlemen who inhabit Mahé have been seafaring people at some period or other of their lives, either in privateers or merchantmen, so the habits they imbibed in the profession of their younger days still clings to them in the insulated retirement of their old age. In scarcely anything do they show it so much as in their hospitality to a stranger, whom they receive with a hearty welcome, and treat with every kind attention. They take infinite pains in the equipment of their trading vessels, in the large schooner-rigged boats with which they carry on the communication between the

islands, and in their canoes; so that, without a near inspection of the latter, you may be often led to suppose that they are regular-built boats. In these they pay their visits to distant houses; and, at the close of a party, it sounds somewhat odd to a stranger to hear Madame Chose's *canoe*, instead of carriage, announced as in attendance. Torches are at hand, and the visiters are lighted to the water, where some stout Negroes, almost in a state of nudity, wait to carry in the ladies and gentlemen. It is owing to the steepness and badness of the roads, occasioned by the deep ravines that descend from the mountains to the water's edge, and from the vicinity of the houses to the sea, that canoes have been adopted instead of carriages.

All the Seychelles Islands, except two of coral, (Denis and Bird,) situated at the edge of the soundings, are of granite, huge blocks of which, generally piled up, as it were, in a confused mass, form their peaks, seldom cultivated, but, with the exception of that of Aride, always covered with verdure, serving as a retreat to a variety of birds, among which, however, the hawk is most numerous. Guinea-fowl in a wild state are also found on them all. The in-

terstices of the rocks and the old trees abound with a large species of millepedes, one of which that I measured exceeded eight inches in length, and was nearly one and a half in girth. Turtle are very numerous among the islands, and people of the lower order at La Digue, who are very poor, subsist in great part upon them, for which they are much ridiculed by the other islanders, who sometimes annoy them as they pass, by holding their noses, and exclaiming, "*Quelle odeur de la tortue de mer!*"

The harbours among the Seychelles are numerous, and, as they are never visited by tornadoes, they may be considered as perfectly safe at all times. Here, during the hurricane months at the Mauritius, the vessels which trade particularly to that island are laid up, exhibiting, in the means that are adopted to preserve them from the effects of the weather, the great care and seamanship of their owners.

Though we admired the pleasing manners and hospitality of the inhabitants of the Seychelles, yet the avarice which they displayed in the exorbitancy of their charges considerably lessened the respect that we otherwise should have entertained for them.

I shall close my account of these islands by a brief description of that extraordinary production the Coco de Mar, or, as it is sometimes termed, Maldive nut. The first account we have of it in history is from the Portuguese, who, during their early voyages to the East Indies, discovered several of the nuts cast up by the sea on the coast of Malabar and in the Maldives. As they could never find nuts at all resembling them in any place which they visited, they were led to believe them to be of marine production, and accordingly called them the Coco de Mar, or sea cocoa-nut. The Indians held them in high estimation for divers extraordinary virtues which they were supposed to possess; and, before the discovery of the locality of the tree in 1789, a nut of this kind has been known to sell as high as three or four hundred pounds. It is a very extraordinary fact, that the nuts are peculiar to the Seychelles; and that, even among that archipelago, so circumscribed in extent, two islands alone produce them. All efforts to transplant the tree to the others have hitherto failed; for although these islands exactly agree in soil, climate, and

general features, yet the trees pine away, and are always sickly and barren. I am inclined to think, however, that those who have made these experiments have not been sufficiently careful in the choice of the spot to plant them in. At Praslin they delight in the richest soil, which is known to exist in the interstices of the rocks, consisting of the decomposition of them blended with animal and vegetable matter, and having from its situation the additional advantage of being kept in a constant state of humidity, because the sun's rays cannot penetrate to dry up the supply of water furnished from time to time by the rain. The other island besides Praslin on which the Coco de Mar flourishes is Curieuse, divided from the former by a narrow channel only.

It is a species of palm much resembling the cocoa-nut tree, except that it is always perfectly straight, and much smaller in circumference in proportion to its length, which generally varies from sixty to eighty feet. Its leaves have a fuller appearance than those of the common cocoa-nut, and the nuts and seed hang immediately at their junction with the trunk of the

tree. The nuts are about one foot long, the same in breadth, and eight inches thick. In colour and fibrous consistency the husk resembles that of the cocoa-nut, and rope for ordinary purposes is manufactured from it. The shell is large, and divided into two compartments, containing a light-coloured jelly, which, though at times brought to table, is very tasteless, and as a fruit not worth eating. The shell forms an excellent pitcher, and when cut serves as plates and dishes for the negroes, and as balers for their canoes. The seed, or rather the receptacle for it, is about two feet long, three inches in diameter, and studded with a small yellow flower, issuing from the corners of diamond-shaped divisions, resembling those of a pine-apple. The whole, strange to say, is unbearable, on account of its strong offensive smell, resembling that of urine, which increases the longer it is kept. Both the stem and the leaves of the Coco de Mar are highly useful in the erection of the huts of the negroes, and the cottages of the lower order of farmers, especially on Praslin; and from the grass, if I may so term it, of the leaves, hats are manufactured, of a very superior quality,

and they are universally worn in the island by all classes of the inhabitants. This extraordinary tree is applied to many more uses, too numerous to be described here: suffice it to add, that its loss would be more severely felt than that of any other production of which the island can boast.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Leven and Barracouta leave the Seychelles for Madagascar. — Country between the Capes Ambre and St. Sebastian. —Waterfall. — Majunga burnt down.—Ball at Mozambique.—Portuguese Creole Women. —Capture of the Soleil at St. Augustine's.— Adventures of Charles Barrett, the Deserter.—Isle of France.

On the 6th of October 1825, we left the Seychelles in company with the Leven, the Albatross having previously sailed for the purpose of surveying, in her way to the Isle of France, the low coral group of the Cargados Islands. We passed the Amirantes, afterwards crossed a variety of counter-currents resembling those already described, and on the 17th stood round Cape Ambre, and commenced the survey of the bays and islets contained between it and St. Sebastian.

Few parts that we examined are more interesting than this small extent of coast: it was

a blank in the hydrographical knowledge of the west coast of Madagascar that required, like many more, to be filled up. In some charts an attempt had been made to delineate the islets, but not the bays; and I never met with any person who knew of their existence. I was charged with the exploration of them inside the islets; and they were so deep that I often expected to find a passage through them into some one of the harbours branching off from British Sound, on the opposite side of the island—a discovery that would have been truly interesting. After all, the isthmus that exists was found to be less than two miles in breadth: it forms a peninsula of the northern extremity of Madagascar, shaped like the barbed head of an arrow, and about forty-two miles in circumference.

The islets are precisely of the same nature as those of Cape St. Sebastian and the Minow group; and, together with the bold features of the hills and mountains, and the luxuriance of the main, presented a very picturesque appearance; which, however, fell short of the view which opened after I entered the last and largest bay before reaching Cape St. Sebastian.

Three or four miles inland a cataract rushes down in a broad stream of water from a gloomy ravine, between two lofty mountains, on the side of the stupendous height of Cape Ambre: it is hurled from the summit of a precipice, apparently one hundred and twenty feet or more in elevation, into the depth of a declining defile, beneath which it meanders in a rushing stream down its crooked and steep descent to the valley below, hidden at times from the sight by the rich and thick surrounding foliage. Though the mountains, and the abrupt hills and lofty conical mounts, rising from the sides and bounding their limits on the sea-shore, are in great part composed of confused masses of broken basaltic columns, yet they are either covered with forest-trees or long grass, in which herds of cattle in a wild state may be seen roaming about and grazing at their leisure.

After the survey of these islands and bays was completed, we stood out in company with the Leven to examine an extensive and detached bank of soundings, and then proceeded to Bembatooka, where we arrived in the night of the 1st of May, and next morning, on looking for the town of Majunga, saw nothing but

a heap of ruins, blackened by fire. The cause, as we soon learned, was as follows:—

Downsoolah, the young and enterprising chief of the Saccalahvoes, began to entertain hopes, from the reduced and sickly state of Ramaneetook's men, that he might succeed in overpowering the garrison, and thus wrest from Rahdahmah his lately-acquired possessions.

Accordingly he called together to his assistance a numerous body of savages of the vicinity, and determined to attempt what he erroneously deemed so easy an enterprise. He commenced hostilities by slaughtering six or seven of Rahdahmah's soldiers, who were placed about him by that politic prince, nominally as a guard of honour, but in reality as spies; as likewise an unfortunate few who happened at the time to be on the Saccalahvo side, purchasing grain for the consumption of Ramaneetook's garrison. Cautious as this chief conceived that he had been in the prosecution of his object, it appeared that Ramaneetook had long entertained some suspicion of it; but he did not expect that his foe would so soon commence operations: hence his neglect to provide for the safety of those who eventually fell. Yet,

though his foresight was lulled in that respect, he failed not to take precautions for the defence of the garrison, by doubling his pickets, erecting within the surrounding palisades a strong mud wall about four feet in height, with loop-holes for musketry, and placing at each gate a piece of ordnance, with the muzzle protruding through the ponderous folding-doors. Thus prepared, Ramaneetook quietly waited to see what turn affairs would take.

When hostilities commenced by the slaughter of his people on the other side, he despatched a report of the circumstance to his brother at Ovah, accompanied by a request for a reinforcement of men: for, since our last visit to Bembatooka, the ravages of the fever had been so great among the Ovah people, that more than half had perished; the remainder, including Ramaneetook himself, being mostly in a debilitated and truly pitiable state. Suffering as they were under the effects of a relentless disease, the noble Arab heart appeared to hold as true to its prince and his cause as ever: not a complaint was uttered; no fear expressed; and when the Saccalahvoes, amounting to upwards of two thousand, mostly armed with muskets,

did arrive and commence the attack, they met with so sharp a reception as obliged them to retreat in the utmost dismay to the town, leaving several of their number dead on the field, at the trifling expense of four or five of the assailed. The occupation of the town was favourable for their savage mode of warfare; and, from the houses, yards, and gardens, they did some execution on the pursuing party of the victorious garrison. Ramaneetook set fire to the place, as the only means of expelling the enemy and saving his men: the flames spread; the frail wooden buildings cracked and fell before them; and the Saccalahvoes, driven from their hold, soon retreated precipitately to the sandy spot where the beef-houses of the Americans are erected. After making but a short stand there against a small party of Ramaneetook's men, they fled panic-struck to their vessels, amounting, as I was informed by the Americans who witnessed the transaction, to upwards of eighty dows and canoes.

In the commencement of the affray, Ramaneetook contented himself with acting on the defensive; but when, after some time, he perceived that the assailants still persevered, his

indignation became furiously excited. He collected a strong body around him, and, sallying forth at the back of the garrison, took the enemy in the rear, spreading consternation and death wherever he appeared. Downsoolah's intention was to have co-operated in person, at the head of his main body, three thousand strong, with the party already defeated. He was on his march towards Majunga, about three miles inland, when he received intelligence of the premature attack on the garrison and its failure: he immediately commenced a retreat, but during it was much harassed by the reinforcement of a thousand soldiers sent by Rahdahmah, who, unfortunately for Downsoolah, came up just at this crisis. This chief, previously to the attack on the garrison, being in want of ammunition, endeavoured at first by entreaties, and then by threats, to prevail on the Americans to sell him a supply. But his appeal was rejected, and his threats defied. After his defeat, all the inhabitants of the villages around, fearful of retaliation from the Ovah men, immediately deserted their huts, and retreated with the discomfited chief and his forces to Majambo Bay.

If the Arab inhabitants of Majunga did not appear among the assailants, some at least were evidently concerned in the affair, as was demonstrated by the fact that the Saccahlavoes possessed dollars, which they could not have obtained unless through the medium of the Arabs.

Agreeably to a custom established in the country from time immemorial, Downsoolah sent to inform Ramaneetook that he and his people were bad men, and that therefore, on such a day and at such an hour, it was his intention to attack the garrison and destroy all in it. Just before the specified time, the Arabs deserted the town, and hurried off with all the vessels they could find to Makumba River, and then back to Majambo, carrying along with them as much of their property as the short space of time permitted them to collect. Their absence was severely felt by the American vessels: however, as they began to return on the day we sailed, it was hoped that the supply of bullocks would be furnished by them as before.

I took a walk on shore one evening to view the deserted town. It was a mass of ashes, roofless huts, and walls blackened by fire; the

herbage was parched up, the gardens destroyed, and nothing remained but misery, desolation, and some wretched half-starved cats, which, true to their nature, chose rather to attach themselves to the houses to which they had been accustomed, than to seek the society of man, who had deserted them. After leaving the town, I directed my course to that part of the hill on which the garrison is erected, and where the Saccahlavoes were defeated.

I was too late: darkness came on rapidly; with hurried step I commenced my return, and, about half-way down the hill, was met by a man, whom I heard uttering loud shouts for some time before he approached. He advised me to get to the boat as speedily as possible, otherwise I should stand a chance of being shot by some of the sentries on the hill, who, during such troublesome times, were as likely to discharge their piece the moment they had challenged, as not. The spot, moreover, was out of the general road, and no one ever ventured thither after dark, unless belonging to the garrison and on duty; even then he was obliged, like the man whom I encountered, to announce his approach by loud shouts; the

omission of which precaution had nearly proved fatal two nights before to an Ovah sergeant, who was severely wounded. The sentries, who were considerably augmented in number since the insurrection of the Saccahlavoes, were posted two and two in different directions, radiating from the garrison as a centre. They sat upon their haunches on a mat, completely covered, excepting the head, with a mantle, and their muskets between their legs; one sleeping while the other watched.

We left Bembatooka on the 5th of May, in company with the Leven, and on the 9th arrived at Mozambique. The military establishment of this place was much improved since our last visit by the arrival of a new captain-general, who had been raised from the governorship of Madeira to that of Mozambique and its dependencies. He was accompanied by a large suite, and a respectable reinforcement of officers and men who had served in the Peninsular war. The 13th, being the anniversary of the birth of his Majesty of Portugal, was celebrated with various ceremonies and rejoicings suitable to the occasion. Salutes were fired at daylight, noon, and sunset; and such

vessels as possessed the means, including the Leven and Barracouta, were dressed out in flags as a mark of respect. A grand procession took place in the morning. The governor held a levee during the day, and at night gave a ball, from which none, whether white or coloured, who could claim a European origin and a rank in life above the lowest order, was excluded. The motley group which collected at the levee appeared strange enough; but I really believe that so extraordinary an assemblage as graced the ball was scarcely ever beheld.

The governor's young, elegant, and fashionable daughters formed a remarkable contrast with the Creole ladies. It is scarcely possible to imagine a more ignorant, wretched, ugly, or disgusting set of women than the generality of these Creoles, especially when verging upon their thirtieth year, when, to a bloated countenance, and sallow, sickly hue, they add corpulency, untidiness, a raven's voice, and the coarsest manners that a female can well possess. If these may be considered as a fair specimen of the rest of their countrywomen—and as far as my experience goes they certainly may—

I should feel surprised if any Portuguese were to marry in the country, even if the obnoxious law, binding him down in that case to remain there, were repealed.

The picture I have drawn, although by no means attractive, I know to be correct; yet I cannot in justice dismiss the subject without endeavouring, as far as my knowledge extends, to show that there are many circumstances that tend to palliate the degraded state to which the women are reduced, and that would scarcely admit of their being otherwise. They receive no education; for, independently of priestly interference, as in the instance of Tête, even their husbands themselves seldom have any more instruction than is merely sufficient for keeping their accounts. Residing at a distance from persons on an equality with themselves, they associate with their slaves alone. Seldom having occasion to appear in a dress proper for their rank in life, they know not how to adjust it when the time comes for them to put it on. They become bloated and corpulent —and why? Because they take no exercise. If a chapel is near, they are carried thither by their negroes in a palanquin, and return by

the same conveyance; if not, they seldom show themselves out of doors. Independently of the heat of the climate, this habit of staying at home may be partly attributed to a national practice of the Portuguese, who appear to me to have contracted, in a slight degree at least, the Moorish custom of secluding the women. Even at Madeira, an island half English, this custom prevails; the women are seldom seen in the streets; and I know an instance of a Portuguese gentleman, who, when for the first time in his life he quitted the island on a visit to England, stood upwards of two hours at the inn door where he put up on landing, gazing in the utmost admiration at our fair country-women as they passed: so novel a sight was it to him to see so many women promenading the streets at liberty! The fault of all this appears to rest with the men; for, although I hold it a folly to choose a partner for life among those who love more to shine in public assemblies than in domestic acquirements, yet there is a medium which, by a happy combination, forms the wife who is equally an ornament to society and the pride of her husband's home. The idea of promoting domestic comfort, together

with perhaps a spice of jealousy, appears to me to have been the origin of the seclusion of the women—a system which, while it is degrading to them as intellectual beings, reduces them to that ignorant, inanimate state in which we found those at the Mozambique ball.

After these remarks on the female portion of the assembly, I shall turn to those of the other sex, who, as it is the policy of the country to enrol in the militia such as are at all above the lower orders, were dressed in the regimentals of that useful body. Some few of these were white, the greater part coloured, and a dozen at least absolutely black. The Arabs and Banyans who were admitted viewed the entertainments from an adjoining room, thrown open for the purpose.

We sailed from Mozambique on the 14th of May, in company with the Leven, from which we parted a few days afterwards, and on the 1st of June arrived at St. Augustine's Bay. Here we again found the Leven, which had outstripped us by one day, and thus surprised a slaver, and captured her before she had time to land her cargo or to run on shore. This vessel, named the Soleil, had long rendered herself

amenable to the British laws by various malpractices. The slaves on board, amounting to one hundred and seventy-two, were in a sickly, starving state; many had already perished, and several, reduced by disease, survived only for a short time their removal to the Leven. Among the crew was recognised Charles Barrett, the seaman who deserted from us when at St. Augustine's last year; although, from privations and repeated attacks of the fever, he was reduced to a mere shadow, and to a state of mind bordering on idiocy.

The disposition of this young man was not so unsettled but that he heartily repented the step he had taken, when he saw the brig departing. Fearful of the natives, in whose power he had so heedlessly placed himself, he carefully shunned their vicinity, for four days sleeping under shelter of the bushes, and subsisting on berries and the rain-water left in the interstices of the rocks. At last he ventured, when in a starving state, to call to a native who was passing along the low land, and who, fortunately for him, spoke a little English, and was amicably disposed. He conveyed him across the river in his canoe to the residence of

Prince Will, on the Bahbah side, who, although he did not appear to like his company, yet always treated him with kindness, and, in return for the few little services he was able to render—for in general he was ill of the fever—supplied him with food. Tom Planter and others of the natives likewise called him in, from time to time, as he passed by their dwellings, and either gave him a portion of their meal, or a supply of grain and meat. Naked, miserable, and emaciated by disease, he was received in charity on board the slaver for a passage to Bourbon. After his removal to the Leven he was confined to his bed, and for many days it was doubtful if he ever would leave it again: however, on his arrival at the Isle of France, he experienced a partial convalescence, and was able to sit up, and sometimes to move about a little in the course of the day. Thinking that, from his then recovered state, I might collect from him some account of the manners and customs of his late associates, I visited him one evening, and, in the short time it was considered not hurtful for him to remain up, I obtained the following particulars:—

The residence of Prince Will was about one

mile above the mouth of the river Oneghaloghe, and half that distance from its right bank. It was situated in the centre of a small village, lying at the foot of huge white cliffs and steep acclivities, that bound the vale through which the river passes. The hut resembled those of St. Mary's, and was elevated a little above the ground. The family consisted of the prince, his wife and three children, together with six Malegasch free servants, who obtained their victuals and a scanty wrapper round their loins, in return for the performance of menial duties within doors, as well as tending the cattle, cutting wood, and tilling the ground with a small hoe, for the cultivation of Indian corn, pumpkins, bananas, sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, cassada, a species of barley, water-melons, large lemons, caravanceras, French beans, &c.

In the centre of the hut was the fire for cooking, and the servants slept round it during the night, wrapped in their cotton mantles of native manufacture; while the prince and his wife reposed on a platform of bamboos raised about two feet above the floor, and their children were accommodated near them in the same kind of way. Underneath these, an earthen-

ware or iron pot, filled with hot embers, was placed when the weather was cold; but at other times the cotton mantle wrappers alone were used.

Plurality of wives, to the number of three, is pretty general, not only with those of the higher order, but with all who can maintain them. The women live in the same hut, and though petty jealousies will arise among them, they never proceed to open hostilities. Their ages often differ considerably; and it is not uncommon to see in the same family one wife of fifty years and another of twelve, below which latter age they are not allowed to marry, although their previous intercourse with men is not considered criminal. A husband may repudiate his wife without assigning any reason; but she does not receive that treatment from the world which a woman under the like circumstances would probably experience in a civilised country. As soon as she quits her husband's hut, she begins to erect one for herself, and to cultivate a plot of ground around it for her support. Aided by the contributions of her neighbours, it soon assumes a thriving appearance; her other comforts are increased from

the same humane sources, and the repudiated outcast is raised in her circumstances, and even placed on a level with those to whose humane contributions she owes her prosperity. It may easily be imagined that the act of repudiation, although allowed, is by no means generally approved: many, therefore, to avoid incurring the displeasure of their wives' relations, hold a consultation with three or four of their most respectable neighbours, whose sanction does away with all general ill feeling towards the husband, but the wife is, nevertheless, equally relieved. She may marry again if she chooses, but she seldom does.

When a native wishes to espouse a woman, he must first obtain her consent, and then that of her parents, who generally present her to him, together with two bullocks, which are killed at the celebration of the marriage, together with one or more of his own, for the purpose of feasting the neighbours for many miles around; the number that attend sometimes exceeding four hundred. The bullocks are cut up into small pieces, and boiled in earthenware pots in an open field, together with a profusion of vegetables and grain of different

kinds. The women dance and sing the whole day, while the men, in groups, sit down and regale themselves with smoking, conversation, and a spirituous liquor obtained from the tamarind-tree. As many of the party come from a distance of twenty or thirty miles, they do not return at night; but, after conversing until tired over the fires, they lie down by them and sleep soundly till the morning dawns, when the festivities of the past day are renewed, and frequently continued for a fortnight.

When a woman is in labour, some of the neighbouring females resort to her house, and attend her until the infant is born. Two days afterwards they assemble near the hut, and, bringing with them fruit and grain, dance round the infant, and decorate it with flowers, as it lies, wrapped up in a cotton cloth, in the arms of the mother, if she is well enough; or, if not, in those of another woman. This feast lasts one day. If the child is a male, it is circumcised a fortnight after its birth, the operation being generally performed by the father with an assagay, while the infant rests in the arms of the mother.

During the short time I was gaining the above information, Barrett often interrupted me by expressing his fears that his desertion would be punished by death; an idea which had strongly impressed itself upon him while in a state of mental alienation, and which clung to him in his nervous convalescence. He became worse next day, and in consequence it was intended on the following morning to carry him to the hospital: however, during the night he evaded the vigilance of his attendant, and, it was supposed, jumped overboard. A strict search was made, but no trace of him could be discovered until many hours had elapsed, when by accident he was found hid away in the hold, in a fearful state of idiocy. He was conveyed to the hospital, where he slowly recovered, and eventually sailed as an invalid for England.

But to return to St. Augustine's. Since our last visit there, King Bahbah had died, and his subjects shaved their heads as a mark of mourning—a practice which altered the appearance of many so much that we could scarcely recognise them. The vociferating demands for presents were as loud as ever, and that portion which

they formerly demanded in King Bahbah's name they now mostly claimed for themselves.

The market was as well stocked as ever, but the Leven's appearance had doubled the prices, and rendered the bargaining yet more difficult and tiresome than before. The day before our sailing, Tom Planter, by some untoward accident, was overturned in his canoe; an occurrence which gave him a good opportunity of exercising his stentorian powers. "Takee Tom Planter up! Tom Planter very goodee man—no fisherman—no sabby swim. Dog fish (shark) yam Tom Planter—pickee Tom Planter up!" One of our boats went to his assistance, and took him on board the Leven.

We bade adieu to St. Augustine's Bay on the 3rd, and, after a prosperous voyage of twelve days, in company with the Leven and Soleil, arrived at the Isle of France, where we found the Albatross, which, having completed the survey of the Cargados Islands, had repaired thither to await our arrival. The various accounts which have been given of the Isle of France render it unnecessary for me to enter into any description of it, the work which I

submit to the public being expressly undertaken for the purpose of describing, in the best way that the opportunities I have had will enable me, such places as are either not at all known, or but imperfectly.

CHAPTER IX.

Foule Point.—Prince Rafferlah.—Conveyance of Ovah Soldiers to Point L'Arc.—Account of Tamatave.—Narrow Escape of the Leven and Albatross on the Star Bank.—Transactions at Delagoa.—Hippopotamus Hunt.—Lieutenant Arlett's perilous situation under the feet of an Elephant.—Meeting at Delagoa between a Mother and her Son.—Lieutenant Farewell's Establishment at Port Natal.—King Chahcah.—Fate of Yacob and Fire.—Arrival at the Cape.—Death of Lieutenant Richard Nash, and Mr. Thomas Farley, Purser of the Leven.

We sailed on the 19th of July from the Isle of France, and, after looking at the small islet Francelin, arrived on the 26th at St. Mary's, Madagascar. Here we learned that a flying report which we heard at the Mauritius, respecting an insurrection of the natives of the east coast of Madagascar against Rahdahmah's sovereignty, was correct. It commenced near Fort Dauphin, and spread rapidly to the northward as far as Point L'Arc, near to which, at

a small village, thirty Ovah soldiers fell victims to the implacable fury of the excited multitude, who had proceeded from various parts of the country about Foule Point to the attack of that place, with a force, as we were told, of not less than six thousand men.

We stopped at St. Mary's two days, and thence commenced beating up along shore towards Tamatave; but, as we were passing Foule Point, the harbour of which is formed by a narrow coral reef, we were prevailed upon to go in by the report of two guns, which we imagined to have been fired with a view to attract our attention by Rahdahmah's governor, or some other officer, who wished to communicate with us. It turned out that the signal was made by Mr. Hastie; and his object was to prevail upon Captain Vidal to transport to the northward in the brig a party of Rahdahmah's soldiers, for the purpose of taking a strong force of the rebels in the rear, while, by a preconcerted arrangement, they should be engaged with another party in front. With this request Captain Vidal complied, considering that to promote the elevation of Rahdahmah to the undisputed sovereignty of all Madagascar

was a duty incumbent on every Englishman who was desirous to forward the commercial interests of his country, and wished well to a prince who had so materially contributed to raise a large portion of our fellow-creatures from the darkness of barbarism and ignorance into a state of civilization.

As the success of Mr. Hastie's plan depended entirely on its secrecy, it was considered best to perform the voyage to Point L'Arc during the night. The intervening time was spent in preparations for the accommodation of so numerous a body of troops on board. Some of the officers, and Mr. Keating, a gentleman who had taken a passage with us, availed themselves of this opportunity of viewing the town; and to the kindness of the latter I am indebted for the greatest part of the following particulars respecting it.

As they approached the shore, the military appearance of the people, all carrying either a musket or a spear, plainly indicated the unquiet state of affairs there. The town consisted of a single street, one side of which was formed by a number of small huts, hastily erected for the accommodation of the Ovah forces, which were

concentrated at this place from the interior; and the other principally by a stockade, or close paling, fronting the houses of persons of the higher class, and surrounding the residence of Prince Rafferlah, the Ovah governor and general. The party first directed their course to the latter, and, on entering, passed through a large door into an extensive court, decorated and rendered cool and pleasant by the wide-spreading branches of a number of mango-trees, neatly arranged, and beneath which was erected a tent for the accommodation of the body-guard.

They entered the door of the house, and, passing through an apartment neatly matted, but of extremely low pitch, ascended a ladder, dignified by the appellation of staircase, into a large and commodious room above, wherein sat Rafferlah at breakfast, with two of his wives, and some officers belonging to a French man-of-war brig lying at anchor off the town. Rafferlah, on the entrance of his visiters, escorted by Mr. Hastie, rose and received them with a hearty shake of the hand, and many compliments, uttered in the Ovah language. He then introduced them to his two wives, who received them in so pleas-

ing, unaffected, and graceful a manner, as, considering how few opportunities they had had of acquiring it, excited much surprise in the party. They were by no means handsome, and were gaudily attired in white gowns, yellow silk handkerchiefs pinned round their shoulders, broad tinsel sashes, and white open-work silk stockings. Their hair was neatly plaited in the Malegasch fashion into a variety of small cords, knotted at the end, and hanging down in front as low as the eyebrows. When walking out, they wore large French bonnets, decorated with a bouquet of artificial flowers. Rafferlah wore a plain blue coat, with a pair of gold epaulettes, white waistcoat and trousers, black cravat, and boots. His complexion was that of a Mulatto: he was of the middle size, apparently about forty years of age, having a pleasing address, and being generally respected for his hospitality to strangers. He spoke no language but his own; yet such was his assiduous attention to his visiters, as almost to make amends for that deficiency.

Mr. Keating expressed surprise that Rafferlah had not younger or more handsome wives, which Mr. Hastie thus accounted for:—The

prince once had a very superior domestic establishment, which, however, in the heat of play, he staked, together with his household furniture, against that of another chief, and lost. The winner left him the two present wives, not considering them worth keeping, on account of their want of beauty.

During the day, Mr. Hastie took Captain Vidal and Mr. Keating with him to see Rafferlah at another of his houses, where he generally slept. It was situated in a sort of park, surrounded with a stockade, and at the gate were two sentries, who carried arms to them as they passed. They there found also a small piece of flying artillery, which had been used with great effect against the rebels in their late disastrous attack on the town.

Immediately around the house was another stockaded enclosure, in which was hoisted Rafferlah's flag, consisting of a union jack, the centre of which had been cut out, and on a field argent, introduced in its stead, were a cock and bull proper. I could never learn the reason for this whimsical device. Having passed by the guard and entered the house, they found Rafferlah, who had taken off his coat and put

on a dressing-gown of a gaudy-coloured cotton. The ladies were also in dishabille. In walking round to view the park, they came on the spot where the French had originally erected their settlement. The ruins were still to be seen: they consisted of large stone edifices, opposite to one of which was a small pillar, with the royal arms of France sculptured on it, and an inscription relating to the first French settlement. Near this pillar a small gun was mounted on a rude elevated platform, so as to command the field outside, where the principal part of the late engagement had taken place.

After quitting the park, a young man, aide-de-camp to Rafferlah, and who escorted the party, conducted them to a neighbouring field, where the heads of some of the rebels were stuck on poles, presenting a horrible and ghastly sight, being in the most disgusting state of putrefaction; but the guide looked at them with the utmost indifference, and when Captain Vidal asked what had become of the bodies of these unfortunate people, he answered with perfect *sang-froid*, "*Les dohgs* (dogs) *ont fini manger.*"

At five o'clock dinner was announced, and

the party repaired to Rafferlah's residence, where they found him, his two wives, Jean Réné, commandant of Tamatave, and several French officers. The dinner was served up in good style, and was of a substantial kind. It consisted of soup and ox-head boiled, fowls roasted and boiled, and two dishes of the country; one a sort of hash of excellent flavour, and the other a couple of fowls dressed in a manner that would not disgrace the first *traiteurs* at Paris; the bones being taken out and the inside stuffed with chopped meats highly seasoned, which, with the rich gravy, gave a delicious flavour to the dish. The ladies behaved the while with great decorum and politeness, and paid their visiters every possible attention. The Princess Randette, the younger of the two, spoke just sufficient English and French to make herself understood. A rather curious sight at the entertainment was the appearance of two file of soldiers with loaded muskets standing in the corner of the room. Rafferlah went out during dinner to give some orders, when they followed him, and on his return took up their former position.

The twilight having set in, the troops,

amounting to one hundred and seventy, repaired in companies to the beach, and were embarked in boats. We sailed immediately. It was a miserable, dark, and wet night; and the decks, crowded as they were with men who had never been on the sea before, exhibited such an appearance as those alone who have witnessed the like can have any conception of. The soldiers, although they suffered so much, yet never complained; and in the morning, on approaching their destination, Point L'Arc, opposite to St. Mary's, even those who had suffered most joined in the general expression of joy and admiration that they had accomplished in a few hours a three days' journey; or rather, to use their own words to express that time, "without once picking rice." We anchored very near the shore; and, to avoid exciting suspicion, the Malegasch were carefully kept out of sight. Some natives approached in a canoe on one side, but, as they neared us, precipitately retreated on observing the formidable force which soon presented itself in our boats on the other. They landed in safety, and it was pleasing to observe how every soldier, as he leaped from the boat, carefully held up his arms and

ammunition above the surf, and instantly repaired to the post assigned to him.

The inhabitants of the neighbouring village had not entered of their own free will into the league against Rahdahmah, and were therefore entitled to mild treatment. Two heralds of peace preceded the invading party, as they bent their steps towards the place; but they were too late: the alarm had spread, and the timid tenants, unaware of the peaceable intention of the Ovah force towards them, had retreated panic-struck to the neighbouring woods.

The soldiers, on landing, as I before remarked, repaired to their respective posts in the ranks. There a certain portion cleaned their arms, while the rest kept on the alert; and they afterwards took a hasty and scanty meal. While standing in their ranks, with their arms leaning against them, it was pleasing to witness their regularity and discipline; but these were still more conspicuous when they had taken possession of the village. Then even the victuals that were left half-cooked in the pots or at the fire remained untouched, and that by men scarcely emerged from a savage state,

flushed with conquest, and whose appetites had been sharpened by a sea-voyage.

The last boat that left Mr. Hastie brought intelligence that his scouts had just returned with sixty prisoners; and we learned subsequently from general report, that his enterprise was completely successful, and consequently that it had been highly instrumental in checking the rebellion.

We sailed immediately, and, after a long beat up, anchored off Tamatave on the 7th of August. This town is apparently not more populous than that of Foule Point, but comfort and regularity have been far more studied in the arrangement of its buildings, which are in general surrounded by stockades, and present a clean and commodious appearance, partly embosomed as they often are in groves of cocoa-nut and other trees. The government-house, the residence of Jean Réné, is of a superior character: it is very well enclosed, and over the large gateway had a neat representation of the device which Rahdahmah has chosen, and which is the same that appears on the flag of Rafferlah. The interior of the house is entirely European: the rooms are papered,

furnished with chairs and tables, and the walls decorated with prints.

The remarks made by a traveller on first visiting a country, arising as they do from first impressions, serve better than any others to mark the difference which exists between that and his own. In this point of view, those of Mr. Keating, who, with the proud morality of an Englishman, thus expresses himself respecting Tamatave, are particularly worthy of attention.

"The people here display in an eminent degree that profligacy of manners which characterizes the inhabitants of the east coast of Madagascar. A striking and revolting instance occurred yesterday—such an instance as one would suppose that animal feeling, unaided by the polish of civilization, would forbid in behalf of outraged decency. Seeing a number of women embarking in a canoe to go to a ship lying in the bay, I accosted a man who appeared very busy in the transaction, and who spoke good French, and asked him if he should like to see his own wife sent off in that manner. He burst into a loud laugh, and answered, '*Parbleu! certainement—la voilà!*' at the same

time pointing to a very interesting young girl getting into the canoe.

We surveyed the reef-formed port of Tamatave, and then sailed, surveying such part of the coast as the prevailing winds would permit us. We fell in with the Leven, and touched at Fort Dauphin, the description of which it is useless to attempt, as our stay was so short. It was in the possession of Rahdahmah's troops, the French having evacuated it during the disturbances.

After quitting Fort Dauphin, we doubled the southern extremity of Madagascar in company with the Leven, and then repaired to the Star Bank, the examination of which had been given to Lieut. Mudge, who left the Isle of France in the Albatross for that purpose a long time before us. The Leven experienced there a narrow escape from shipwreck, having during a strong breeze and a heavy sea nearly run aground on a coral patch, just awash, which the glare of the sun prevented her crew from seeing, until it was so near that they cleared it with difficulty. The schooner, during the survey of this dangerous assemblage of reefs, had, if possible, a still more narrow escape.

While at anchor surveying them, a heavy gale came on, and raised so great a sea as to destroy one of her boats. Soon afterwards it increased so much, that Lieut. W. Mudge, as the only chance of saving the vessel, was on the point of cutting the cable, when it parted. His situation now was not much better; for a labyrinth of reefs, with the sea rolling in an awful manner upon them, was close to leeward of the vessel. She escaped by a miracle, passing through heavy breakers, in which it was expected that she would strike every moment, when of course all on board must inevitably have perished.

We arrived at St. Augustine's on the 20th of August, and the next day sailed for Delagoa, and anchored off the Portuguese Fort there on the 28th, having in our way examined the long low coral islets called Boccas da India. The Albatross joined us a few hours after we anchored from Elephant Island, whither she had been obliged to repair on account of the hostility evinced towards her by the Portuguese governor, for insisting on the restitution of an English merchant-brig, the Eleanor of London, which he had seized and confis-

cated for trading up the Mapoota. He ordered the Albatross to leave the river, under the penalty of being sunk by the guns of the Fort. Capt. Owen in the morning took possession of the Eleanor, and wrote to the governor, insisting on the restoration of every article which had been landed from her, and demanding an explanation of his conduct towards the Albatross, as also for having taken down the British flag that was hoisted on the Temby side by the late Commodore Nourse, and erected that of Portugal in its stead.

The governor, in his answer, defended his conduct by stating that Delagoa was to all intents and purposes a Portuguese possession—a fact that his predecessors had never announced to us; and that he was particularly enjoined in his instructions from the Governor General of Mozambique to seize all vessels that attempted to trade with the natives unless through the medium of the Portuguese; that Lieut. W. Mudge had endeavoured to take possession of a vessel confiscated under the above circumstances; and therefore, considering that as an insult, he ordered him away. He added, with respect to the flag, that it

had no business there, and consequently he had only done his duty by substituting the one which he had hoisted in its room. After two or three letters more had passed, backed on the part of the Leven, Barracouta, and Albatross, by active preparations for demolishing the Fort, the governor at last acceded to every demand that was made, and it was mutually agreed that the Eleanor should proceed to London, and the governor's memorial of her case be presented to the Portuguese ambassador, before any other steps should be taken respecting her; so that if she should be considered by the ambassador to be Portuguese property, she might be claimed accordingly. We afterwards took down the flag-staff with the Portuguese colours on it.

All our attempts to take a hippopotamus had hitherto failed: therefore, as we were not likely to have so good a chance of procuring one as this our last visit to Delagoa afforded, a party of officers volunteered for the chase, and were conveyed up the Dundas River in the Albatross, which remained there with them two nights; a procedure not deemed dangerous, as the sickly season had not commenced.

The schooner in her way up probably touched the back of a hippopotamus, for one suddenly rose from under the stern, a little way from our gig, which she was towing. The evening set in before they reached that part of the river where the animals of this species most abound; however, three parties were formed: they were unsuccessful, and returned after dark. The night was cold and chilly, and a dense vapour hung upon the banks on each side of the river, emitting disagreeable effluvia. The time of low water was considered the best for the hippopotamus hunt; therefore, until that should arrive, the party amused themselves in scouring the woods for any game that might chance to fall in their way. The deer, which were very numerous, consisted principally of three species, the fallow, spring (*antilope euchore*), and harte-beest (*antilope bubalis*); but these, as well as the other animals which they saw, consisting of buffaloes and monkeys, were so shy that none of the party could even approach near enough to fire. The monkeys in particular were very wild and timid—a fact rather strange when it is considered that many of them apparently equalled man in stature, and

their leaps indicated extraordinary strength. Among the birds, the Guinea-fowl was the most common. During the chase, the party were obliged to be very careful where they trod, as the forest abounded with pits dug by the natives to entrap the hippopotami: they were about twelve feet deep, formed like a wedge, and so neatly covered with reeds, in order to deceive the wary victim, that even some of the party, notwithstanding the precautions they took, were caught, but fortunately not in any of those whose bottoms were studded with stakes and spears.

As the time of low water approached, the party quitted the woods, and bent their steps towards the schooner, along the banks of the river. Lieutenants Owen and Arlett, together with Messrs. May, Jamieson, and Barrette, and about a dozen seamen, composed the company. On reaching a spot where a hippopotamus had been seen sporting in the water, they heard a loud rushing among the reeds, as if the animal had on the discharge of their pieces retreated thither. Messrs Arlett and Barrette, with two of the seamen, immediately followed, with the intention of driving him out again.

The former officer was a little in advance, and soon was heard to exclaim aloud, "Here he is!" The shrill angry scream of some huge animal instantly succeeded, and in a few minutes Mr. Barrette issued from the reeds with his face covered with blood, loudly calling for assistance, as Lieut. Arlett was attacked and borne down by an elephant of the largest size. The party were immediately on the alert, and, though they had no shoes on to guard their feet from the reeds, actively commenced their search for the unfortunate officer, whom they expected to find a mangled corpse. The elephant, alarmed at the increased number of his opponents, retreated as they advanced, leaving his victim on the ground in a state that may be more easily imagined than described.

He was stretched motionless on his back, covered with blood and dirt, and with his eyes starting from their sockets, in all the expressive horror of a violent death. It was some time before he recovered his senses, and became sufficiently collected to give coherent answers to the numerous questions that were asked. It appears that, from the thickness of the reeds, he was close to the animal before he discovered

it, and uttered the exclamation of " Here he is !" as already mentioned. These words had hardly escaped him, when he became aware that he had exposed himself, not to a hippopotamus, but to an elephant.

The animal, which appeared violently agitated, with its trunk raised and waving in the air, the instant he spoke, reared upon its hind legs, turned short round in that attitude, and, with a shrill passionate cry, rushed after him, bearing down the opposing reeds in his way. Lieut. Arlett vainly attempted to effect his escape among them. For a minute a slight chance was afforded him ; for the animal, perceiving one of the seamen mounted on the top of a tree apparently twenty feet high and three in circumference, and menacing him by his voice and gestures while preparing to fire, turned short round, and shrieking with rage, reared upon its hind legs and bore the tree to the ground, fortunately without hurting the man, who, shrouded in its branches, escaped among the reeds. The assailant then turned again with increased fury to pursue Lieut. Arlett, who, in his eagerness to escape, stum-

bled and fell, the huge beast passing over him and severely bruising his left ankle.

As soon as he had passed, Mr. Arlett rose, and, limping with pain, again attempted to retreat; but the elephant returned to the attack. For an instant his trunk was brandished in a threatening manner in the air, and the next the unfortunate officer was struck senseless to the ground. On recovering himself, his huge antagonist, apparently twelve feet in height, was chafing and screaming with rage, pounding the earth with his feet, ploughing it with his tusks, and by repeated blows of his trunk filling with mud the body of his prostrate victim, on whom, had either of those means of offence once taken full effect, death must have been the inevitable and instant result. Mr. Arlett was between his legs; consequently, considering how completely he was exposed to his fury, one might imagine that the elephant was content to frighten and disdained to destroy. Be this as it may, he had in every respect a most providential escape. He was conveyed carefully to the boat, for in his state much motion created excruciating

pain, and immediately taken on board the schooner, where, on examination, it was found that his body was severely bruised; yet no bone was broken excepting the fibula, or shin-bone of the left leg, which was supposed to be slightly fractured. When he encountered the elephant, he had a rifle in his hand; but the contact was too close for him to attempt to discharge it at an antagonist whose desperation, when wounded, is death to him whose first shot when near does not prove mortal. When he was conveyed to the boat, the rifle was forgotten, and a party, consisting of four, three of whom were armed, were despatched to look for it. Scarcely had they regained it, when the elephant rushed in among them: the first and second men fired without effect; the ball of the third was more fortunate, and turned him.

From the number of shot that were discharged and apparently took effect on the hippopotami, no doubt could be entertained that some were killed. The natives had promised to inform them when the bodies floated on shore; but experience soon showed how little reliance can be placed on a hungry man's word, when a savoury repast is placed in the opposite

scale:—the head of a hippopotamus was discovered, the body having been conveyed away and eaten. This circumstance awoke the suspicions of the party; the detachment traversed the bank of the river, and soon came on a company of the natives, who were just beginning to cut up the body of another hippopotamus that had been killed. They immediately took possession of it, and conveyed it to the schooner, while upwards of three hundred natives, on the opposite bank of the river, showed by their menacing gestures how displeased they were at losing a share of the prize. In this animal three musket-balls had penetrated through the skin, which was an inch and a half thick, and lodged between the ribs. The fatal wound in the flank was from the rifle of Mr. Jamieson. The beast was of small size; the head, without the tongue, weighing only two hundred and six pounds. The natives were constant attendants during the hunt, and no doubt had by far the largest share of the game.

When Captain Owen was up the Mapoota, in the Albatross, in August 1823, his attention was engaged by the intelligent appearance of a boy, who, in a half-famished state, requested to be

taken on board. His father, who was a man in very advanced years, on the receipt of a present, gave his consent; and, though he was fully impressed at the time with the idea that he was selling his son as a slave, he parted from him with the utmost indifference; yet, with that native cunning, of which few savages are destitute, after walking to a short distance, he turned back and exclaimed, "No sell 'um, cappen—lend um," evidently with a view to gloss over his unnatural conduct and to deceive others. This observation he was afraid to make while the bargain was in agitation, no doubt thinking that it might stop its completion. Captain Owen repeatedly assured him that his son went with his own accord, and would not be considered as a slave; but it was obvious that he did not believe the assertion.

On the return of the Leven, this boy, who was christened Toby, was permitted to go on shore. The meeting between him and his father was in no respect interesting, except inasmuch as the astonishment which he manifested on beholding him again proved his unnatural roguery in parting with him. His mother, when she first recognised him, uttered

the most piercing cries, accompanied by the usual "Eigh! eigh!" expressive of astonishment and pleasure. This exclamation she repeated for a short time, and then began dancing and screeching round him, concluding the whole by approaching, and, in the most affectionate manner, caressing and stroking him down the face, while, in a whining, half-singing tone, she talked away, apparently as if enquiring what had befallen him since he left.

In every succeeding visit to Delagoa since our first arrival there, we observed that the natives were becoming still more wretched in their circumstances: many, it appeared, had voluntarily sold themselves as slaves to avoid death by famine; for, to such an extent had the ravages of the Oratontahs been lately carried, that even onions, at one time so abundant at Delagoa, had become exceedingly scarce; and, as a climax to these miseries, the Portuguese had burned their boats, upon the plea that their existence accorded not with the safety of the Fort, and also that they enabled them to carry on a contraband trade with strangers.

We had numerous visiters, as usual; but the

appearance of them all bespoke the famished life they led. What a contrast did these poor people exhibit in their present situation to that in which we first found them! The little market, the fair exchange, and the busy mercantile spirit had vanished; beggary alone remained, and that was resorted to even for the necessaries of life. George, who, when we parted with him, had a fine robust figure, and was ever gay and active, was worn down by want and disease to a mere skeleton; his look weak and timid, and his mind unnerved and gloomy. Even Bill had wonderfully altered: his quick repartee, his powers of mimicry, and his jovial disposition had almost entirely forsaken him, and given place to a settled, thoughtful look. At times he affected to be gay, but it was evident that he did not feel so.

Several of the Delagoa natives who accompanied us in our voyage chose rather to remain in the country than to go to England; however, a few still continued with us, among whom was Mungatawney, who had now become well acquainted with our language, and perfectly reconciled to the manners of the seamen, which from the first he had studiously imitated.

After we left the river, we completed the survey of the bar outside, in company with the Leven and Albatross, and then sailed for the Cape, calling in our way, on the 15th of September, at Port Natal, where we were visited by Lieutenant Farewell of the Royal Navy, who settled there in March 1824, having obtained permission to do so from Chahcah, a powerful king of the Kaffers, who had some time before subdued that part of the country and almost annihilated the inhabitants. He granted to Mr. Farewell an extensive tract along the coast, and encouraged him by assistance in his mercantile pursuits; but, as he is a most capricious and merciless tyrant, it is not unlikely that he may soon choose to adopt another line of conduct.

Mr. Farewell visited him at his capital, which is many miles in the interior; but he is seldom there, having for some years past been engaged in overwhelming the weaker powers about him; and in these plans he has been so successful, that he imagines himself invincible, and declares that it is only on account of the respect he has for the English that he permits them to retain the Cape. He has a high idea

of the efficacy of English medicines, and conceives that while he continues to take large quantities of them he shall not die; in consequence, he soon drank all the liquids of that kind which Mr. Farewell had brought with him, and ate his way through the salves, ointments, and other solids; and, when we arrived, was engaged in emptying a keg of vinegar, which Mr. Farewell, having no more medicines left, was obliged to send to him. He is very proud of his house, and, while showing it to Mr. Farewell, asked him if his king had so good a one: twice he was answered in the affirmative; yet, as he still persisted in repeating the question, and appeared to feel amazed at the answer, Mr. Farewell at last gave such a one as was calculated to gratify his vanity. The rising anger of Chahcah was immediately appeased, and, assuming great complacency and condescension of manner, he offered to lend his carpenters to the King of England to erect him a house.

When Mr. Farewell, before he settled at Natal, visited that port, as well as Delagoa and other places along the coast, in a mercantile voyage, he prevailed upon Fire and Yacob to

accompany him. The former was shot accidentally some time afterwards, and Yacob deserted at Delagoa, and was supposed to have been murdered by the natives. When, however, Mr. Farewell formed his settlement at Port Natal, he found that Yacob was with Chahcah, with whom he was a great favourite, serving as an interpreter, with the rank of a chief and the surname of "Voyageur," and possessing a large establishment and many wives. The way in which he contrived to obtain such high favour is said to have been this:—the Kaffers have an idea that, when a king dies, an evil genius, in the shape of a cat, performs the part of executioner. Yacob availed himself of this superstition; and well knowing that Chahcah could not bear the idea that he should ever die, he repaired one evening to the king's residence, and there with his spear commenced a most furious combat with vacancy. Chahcah and all present were astonished, and Yacob, after he had continued his exertions until he was ready to sink from fatigue, stopped, and exultingly informed the king that he had killed the cat which was about to take away his life.

Mr. Farewell had accumulated a large store of ivory, and might have been more successful, had he not been disappointed in the receipt of a stock of beads and other articles, for which he had despatched his small sloop to the Cape. She was never afterwards heard of, and in all probability was burnt, as some of the Kaffers along the coast reported that they had seen a white man's house going past on fire. We stopped only a short time at Port Natal, and then sailed for the Cape, where we all arrived by the 28th September 1825.

The inveteracy of the Delagoa fever was here manifested by the death of Mr. Thomas Farley, purser of the Leven, and Lieutenant Richard Nash of the Royal Navy, a gentleman who, after invaliding from His Majesty's sloop Espiègle, sailed as a passenger on board the Leven, for the purpose of gaining a knowledge of surveying. He was supposed to have taken the fever while engaged in the hippopotamus hunt up the Dundas River, and Mr. Farley by sleeping two nights on shore at the Fort. Both continued in good health until after our arrival at the Cape, a period of three weeks and upwards.

CHAPTER X.

Departure from the Cape.—Dassen Island.—Arrival at Angra Pequena.—Cross erected by Bartholomew Diaz.—The Desert and Cape Negro.—Benguela.—Arrival at St. Paul de Loando.—The Ship is fired at while going in.—Account of the place.—Parting from the Leven.—The River Zaire, or Congo.—Visit from the Natives.—Their Superstitions.—Savages of the Morna Morsa side come out to attack the Pinnace, but are obliged to retreat.—Observations on the Congo.

As soon as the last of the charts of the east coast were ready to be forwarded to England, and the three vessels had undergone such refit as was deemed necessary before they commenced the survey of the west coast, we left the anchorage off Simon's Town, and, by the Commodore's orders, sailed round to Table Bay, that we might furnish him with a plan of it before we finally quitted the Cape.

This business completed, the Albatross sailed on the 9th of November 1825 for Sierra Leone,

by way of St. Helena; and next day we also left, to commence the survey of that portion of the coast allotted to us—namely, from the river Zaire, or Congo, to that of Formosa, in the Bight of Benin. Though we had in prospect a long voyage, and one during which we felt well assured that we should be subject to many privations and hardships, yet the departure from the Cape was hailed by the seamen as a grand point gained towards returning home; and the capstan, as they hove up the anchor, went cheerily round to the exulting half-suppressed cry of "Homeward-bound." As we passed Robben Island, the Botany Bay of the Cape, I could not but reflect how little the pure white and clean external appearance of the prisons from which we had obtained the captive Kaffers corresponded with the misery and filth which prevailed within. The neat farm-houses of the Dutch, so numerous in the immediate vicinity of the Cape, and the lofty highland scenery, gradually disappeared, and were succeeded by sterile granite hills, above which in the distance the lofty peaks of an inland range of mountains at times showed themselves.

On the third day after our departure, we

anchored off Dassen Island, situated in latitude 33° 25′ 53″ south, and longitude 17° 59′ 54 east, about six miles from the main land. It is a mile and a half in length, and one broad, and everywhere, excepting to the eastward, surrounded by a reef, extending from a little less to a little more than one mile, on which the sea breaks with most furious violence, especially among a group of large rocks on its outer edge, to the west of the centre of the island; above which, though upward of eighty feet high, the surf may be seen from the opposite side flying up in the air, and resembling, in a magnified degree, the spouting of a whale. Dassen is the property of a gentleman at the Cape, and the revenue which he derives from it arises from eggs, twenty-four thousand of which, it is said, are generally collected every fortnight, and sold in Cape Town, at a penny each for those of the gulls, but penguins' eggs for much less. The island is absolutely sterile, and formed of rugged masses of granite, with slabs of which the boors and hottentots who reside on it erect their huts, glossing them over, instead of paint, with a bright dark Japan lustre, which, by the agency of fire, they obtain from

the sea-weed. There is no fresh water on the island: the boat that conveys the eggs to Cape Town supplies its inhabitants with that necessary. The penguins are very numerous on this island, and, as their eggs alone are sought after, and they are not themselves annoyed, they show no timidity. Captain Vidal brought off two: they rejected all food that was offered; one died in a week, the other outlived him by one more.

We anchored for one night in Saldanhah Bay, off which we obtained our last view of Table Bay Mountain, being then sixty miles distant. The country continued to present the same rocky, sterile appearance, and a short distance inland from Cape Deseada, situated in latitude 32° 19′ 11″ south, and longitude 18° 9′ 20″ east, rose into abrupt craggy eminences and broken ranges of mountains, at the foot of which we discerned a solitary farm-house, the last habitation we perceived till we had passed the Desert. Off Oliphant River we fell in with and communicated with the Leven; and afterwards, in the course of our survey of the coast,—for, during the day, we always made a point of obtaining such observations as we could,

although not directed to do so,—we came to a lofty cliff, in latitude 27° 20″ south, from the summit of which a massive shaft of granite descended to the water's edge, and formed a stupendous arch, upwards of one hundred feet in height. Its appearance was grand and imposing.

On the 21st of November, a heavy south-east gale set in; we scudded before it at a great rate, and in the afternoon saw the cross erected by Bartholomew Diaz at the south entrance of Angra Pequena. We passed it and anchored in the bay; and, though the wind there was directly off the shore, such was the fury of the blasts, that the surface of the water exhibited nearly one continued sheet of foam. I accompanied Captain Vidal on shore, for the purpose of examining the cross, and obtaining the latitude and longitude of the point. While running down the coast, I accustomed myself to judge whether the eminences were formed of sandstone or granite, according as they presented to the view the huge blocks with rounded points of the former, or the strata-marked, rugged, and sharp projecting angles of the latter: however, on landing, I soon found

that I was wrong in this instance. The granite was in a state of decomposition, and not to be recognised at a short distance. The sand brought off by the gusts of wind was painful enough to the eyes on board, but on shore it was far worse; for it swept along the surface of the rock in clouds, and almost blinded us, as we advanced against it to the summit of the small granite eminence on which Diaz erected his cross in 1481, as a memento of his discovery of the place.

This cross is said to have been standing forty years ago, but we found it thrown down, evidently by design, as that part of the shaft in a rough state which had originally been buried in the rock remained unbroken; which never could have been the case, had it been turned over any otherwise than by having previously been lifted up from its foundation. The motive for this shameful mutilation probably was to search for such coin as might be supposed to have been placed under the cross when first erected. Whether the spoiler afterwards strove to make some amends by setting up a portion of it again, I cannot pretend to determine; but such was the state in which we found it. A

piece of the shaft, including the part originally placed in the ground, and altogether five feet and a half in length, was propped up by means of large stones placed against it, and crossed at the top by a broken fragment, which had originally formed the whole length of the shaft below the cross, six feet above the ground, and twenty-one inches under. Its shape was rounded on one side, but left square on the other, evidently for the purpose of inserting the inscription, which the unsparing hand of Time, during the lapse of nearly three centuries and a half, had so obliterated that scarcely the remnant of a letter was visible. The whole was of a coarse white marble, and in diameter eight inches one way, and eight and a half the other. In descending the eminence by a different and more craggy path than that which I had followed in going up, I suddenly came upon the cross: it was sixteen inches square on the flat side, and a projecting piece at the top, of the same form and dimensions in regard to breadth and thickness as the shaft below, had given to the whole, when perfect, the desired appearance. On the flat of the cross was an inscription, but like that of the shaft, it was almost

obliterated. By observation the latitude was ascertained to be 26° 38′ 18″ south, and the longitude 15° 00′ 32″ east.

The gale still continued when we left Angra Pequena, and, by the next morning, we were upwards of one hundred and thirty miles from it, having meanwhile passed the limit of the sterile rocky country, and being then off the Desert. It rose into lofty hills, of light-coloured sand, having in some parts a small rocky patch projecting from it, and at times a few tufts of dry grass. A sandy flat, from three to five miles in breadth, extended from these hills to the sea, above which the shore was so slightly elevated, that, until very near, the heavy surf which rolled in upon it could alone be distinguished. In several parts were observed pools of water, often covered with sea-fowl; and, as we advanced to the northward, the strand was lined with drift trees, which, as the current always sets to the northward, must evidently come from the opposite direction. Now, as we had not seen a single growing tree since we left the Cape, and even there none that equalled in size those which had drifted to this part, it is evident that they must have been brought from

some very distant place—probably from the Kaffer coast. The rivers, it is true, might have ejected them, but I should think not; for scarcely any are of magnitude, and none that I have ever read of pass through a country where large trees exist. In some parts of the Desert the sand-hills rose to a very great height, and had not a single vestige of verdure on them, or even a rock or variety of tint to relieve their uniform spotless appearance.

On arriving at Cape Negro, in latitude 15° 45 south, and longitude 11° 49′ east, it seemed as if we were in a quite different climate. The Desert ended, the first tree (of the palm kind) seen for many hundred miles made its appearance, together with a hut and a native; and the heavy sea, and the boisterous and cold raw weather, which had before prevailed, subsided into smooth water, and a mild pleasant temperature. Cape Negro is formed by a precipitous mass rising at the extremity of a low projecting point, and resembling an island in the approach. It is intersected by horizontal strata of different colours, and composed of sand, indurated nearly to the consistency of stone. On its summit was a small marble cross, erected by the early Por-

tuguese voyagers, and resembling in size and form that at Angra Pequena. The Leven stopped off it, and some of her officers landed to examine the cross. It was found standing, as it had originally been erected, but was so defaced by time that the inscription was rendered totally illegible, though the arms of Portugal sculptured on it continued in a tolerable state of preservation.

The precipice was found on examination to abound in fossil shells, or the inside of them, of various species: the most remarkable were of the spiral form, and great numbers were with ease screwed out of the incorporated muddy mass.

The country, after leaving Cape Negro, continued gradually to improve, yet at best was very sterile. The few trees that were seen were generally of the palm kind; the rest were so stunted in their growth as rather to deserve the denomination of bushes. A straggling hut was perceived here and there, but not any village.

It was arranged by Captain Owen, when we last parted, to meet at Benguela: on our arrival there, on the 30th of November, the

Leven had not yet made her appearance. Benguela was probably one of the latest settlements of the Portuguese on the west coast, and I have little doubt that it was the southernmost; the land in the vicinity of the sea being, as I have already described, either a sandy desert or sterile rocky waste, until very near the Cape, where the weather, allowing that the country in other respects answered their expectations, did not suit the Portuguese; who, notwithstanding the courage and perseverance displayed by their early voyagers in surmounting in the infancy of navigation the stormy latitude of the Cape, yet appear to me to have never had any inclination to settle in a country where fair weather and a mild climate did not prevail.

The town of Benguela is situated in an open bay, formed to the southward by a projecting point of cliffs, above which rises Mount Sombrero, known more generally among the English by the name of St. Philip's Cape. On account of its peculiar form, I attempted, accompanied by some men, to ascend it from the sea-shore. With great difficulty we mounted some way up, on the sharp edge of a ridge,

having a deep ravine on either side, full of large stones and low precipices. Such was the loose decomposed nature of the soil, and the steepness of the ascent, that, after having been arrested in our progress by a crumbling bank and precipice which we could not scale, we were obliged to return, in some places lying at full length and with great caution easing ourselves down. The mount is formed of decomposed sandstone, intermixed with mica, and abounding in nodules of quartz, often presenting in their crystallization a very pretty appearance.

Senhor José Victor Jorge, the governor, spoke English remarkably well, having received his education, in part, at Reading in Berkshire. He was a post-captain in the Portuguese service, and had lately commanded one of their frigates. This gentleman had obtained the government of Benguela chiefly to gratify his fondness for the chase, which there is little doubt will be eventually the means of carrying him off. Though perfectly aware of the malignity of the climate, he flattered himself that such a result was not at all likely; and at the same time he very gravely

showed me, in a visit that I paid him, the model of a sort of sentry-box, in which he intended occasionally to pass the night in the forest or marshy grounds, when lying in wait for the wild beasts.

As Senhor José had arrived from Europe only a few days before, I could obtain but little information from him respecting Benguela. He assured me that at present it is rapidly declining, but that some years ago it had a greater trade than St. Paul de Loando, having then an average annual export of twenty thousand slaves, now reduced to less than half that number. The natives in the interior will not permit either the Portuguese, or even those who are known, if not by their colour, at least by their straight hair instead of wool, to be of that extraction, to penetrate far into the country. A journey of twenty days is the utmost they have ever been known to take; but, through the medium of a large and powerful tribe, whose possessions lie at that distance, they sometimes obtain information respecting their settlements on the east coast. The great falling off in the supply of slaves is attributed to the peaceable disposition which for some years

has prevailed among the natives of the interior towards each other. How disgraceful and inhuman must be that commerce which thrives alone by the warfare of mankind! Such is evidently the case with the slave-trade; and its decline, together with the reason assigned, was most feelingly deplored by a Portuguese officer who related the circumstance to me—a man who had served in the Peninsular war, and carried four decorations at his breast!

The buildings of the town of Benguela are erected of half-baked brick, with mud for cement, and the whole coated with a thick plaster of shell-lime, which alone preserves the fabric from incorporating itself with the earth on the first shower of rain that chances to fall. So frail indeed are they, that, when once they begin to decay, the inhabitants attempt not to repair them, but build others. The roofs are well adapted for admitting a circulation of air throughout the rooms immediately below, being alternately covered with boards and with what appeared to me at the time to be the foot-stalks of the palm-leaf, but which I afterwards discovered growing as reeds on the banks of the Congo. They were placed apart, and the

tiles above overlapped each other in such a manner that, although you could distinctly see between them, no wet could enter. The site of the town is a marsh, full of stagnant pools, and in the rainy season in great part inundated; consequently, it is exceedingly unhealthy, so that the Portuguese term it Hell, and affirm that not one of their countrywomen has ever been known to live there beyond a very short time. March and April, during which the rains prevail, are accounted the sickly months; yet, from what I could learn, all seasons there appear to be equally dangerous to health.

The huts of the natives are very wretched: they look at a distance like a cluster of hayricks, and are formed of reeds, scattered as it were over a framework, without any studied shape. Yet, rude as are these dwellings, the canoes which they build for going on the water are far more so: they are of an oblong square form, and are constructed of logs from a tree of a light, spongy, and fibrous nature, probably of the palm kind, attached together by means of large pegs. The interstices between the logs are not filled up, and consequently the

water washes in and out: still they sufficiently answer the purpose for which they are intended—that of fishing near the shore.

I saw no sheep at Benguela, but bullocks and goats in abundance. They were of a small breed, especially the former; the largest of five that we took on board weighed only one hundred and eighty pounds, and the smallest, one hundred and thirty; partly owing, it is true, to the lean state in which they were, apparently occasioned by the constant annoyance of ticks, whose bite often produced ulcers. The bodies of some of these insects were nearly half an inch in diameter. Lions and tigers abound in the country about Benguela, and hippopotami and alligators in a small river near it. Elephants likewise were common at one time, but at present they are scarce.

The chief defence of the town consists in a large fort, which, however, is now fast mouldering to ruin. It is mostly built of earth, of an oblong form, and mounted with a number of guns of the largest calibre; yet it possesses little strength, for the small garrison it contains is totally inadequate to its defence. When it was first erected, the extensive area which it

encloses was in all probability occupied by the houses of the merchants; but, as that at present is no longer the case, what then was necessary as a mutual defence, now constitutes its weakness. The houses occupied by the European and Creole Portuguese are very few in number, and in all I observed that the walls enclosing the slave-yard attached to them were loopholed for musketry.

The town is of small extent, and its population, I was informed, exceeded not five thousand, nearly all of whom were either free Blacks or slaves. None of the natives belonging to the inland tribes were there; but, two days before we arrived, one of them had waited on the governor. There was nothing particular in his appearance, excepting that, according to a favourite fashion of his tribe, his hair was clotted with a black composition, and thickly studded with alligators' teeth, with the points projecting.

The marimbah and the kassangah, so common on the east coast, were likewise the favourite musical instruments of the natives about Benguela. I observed that the kassangah, although not affixed to a gourd, is always placed on one when they play upon that instrument.

We left Benguela on the 5th, passed the small Portuguese establishment of Nova Redonda, and, on the afternoon of the 8th, arrived off St. Paul de Loando, where, while beating in, a pilot came on board. We soon approached a large battery, hewn from the side of a rocky cliff, and presenting a formidable double tier of artillery. A gun was discharged unshotted, and presently a second. Captain Vidal inquired the reason of the pilot, who assured him that these shot were not destined for us; we, therefore, continued our course; but, just after tacking, when within a quarter of a mile of the battery, we were nearly struck by a shot that took the water within two fathoms of our gangway, and passed under the ship's bottom. We hove-to immediately, and I was sent to demand the reason for such extraordinary conduct.

The commandant pleaded orders from the governor in excuse, and strongly censured the conduct of the pilot, who, he affirmed, knew very well that, by the late regulations of the port, no foreign vessel could pass the fort until she had communicated with it, and obtained the governor's sanction to proceed to the anchorage off the town. To him Captain Vidal wrote, de-

manding an explanation of the insult which had been offered to the flag of his Britannic Majesty. The affair ended amicably, by the governor stating that, since the disturbances in the Brazils, he had deemed it necessary to adopt precautions against a surprise from the forces of that country; that, accordingly, he had instituted stricter regulations respecting the admission of foreign vessels; that the pilot had lost his situation for not informing Captain Vidal of the reason of the firing; and that the commandant of the fort had committed himself, inasmuch as he had not distinguished a man-of-war by her pennant from a merchant-ship. This officer was obliged to apologize, and very naturally asked how he should behave when the next foreign vessel appeared. "Obey your orders," was the answer; "you will see no more vessels of this sort here." The poor commandant bowed to the necessity of the case; he murmured not, but it was evident that he proudly felt that he had only done his duty. We soon anchored off the town, where the Leven joined us, having, since we parted from her, accurately surveyed several places along the coast.

The city of Loando St. Paulo, or, as it is now termed, St. Paul de Loando, is described in an old book as belonging to the kingdom of Angola, and situated in the district of Loando. It was erected by the Portuguese in 1578, and taken in 1641 by the Dutch, who fitted out an expedition from the Brazils for that purpose. The motive for the undertaking was to obtain slaves to cultivate the extensive tract of country which they were clearing. The Dutch retained their conquest only seven years; at the termination of which, St. Paul de Loando was ceded by treaty to its former possessors, with whom, I believe it has ever since remained. The city is of large extent; it is a bishop's see, contains several churches, and many private and public buildings, which, by their size, and the style of their construction, must, when in good condition, have contributed much to embellish the place; but now a large portion of them is in a ruinous state, to which still more are rapidly approaching, and nearly all have a dirty exterior appearance, little according with their otherwise imposing effect.

The best part of the city is built on a height, at the extremity of which, jutting out towards

Loando Island, the largest fort or citadel is erected for its defence. The lower town skirts the harbour, and chiefly consists, with the exception of one street, of mean hovels, the dwellings of the free black portion of the population. It extends about a mile and three-quarters in length, and terminates near a low formidable battery, connected with the shore by a narrow causeway only. The height, crowned by the citadel, runs round at the back of the lower town, and forms the precipice in which the fort that fired on us is excavated. This is opposite to the north end of the low narrow island of St. Loando, which forms the deep and commodious harbour, three miles and a half long, and two in breadth, and capable of containing the largest fleets in perfect safety. There is also a southern harbour, but the channel into it from the sea is narrow, shoal, and intricate, and the channel from it inside, round the citadel point to that already described, is passable only by boats or vessels of the smallest size. I could not ascertain what was the population of St. Paul de Loando, but, from its great extent and the crowded appearance of the native huts, it must be considerable.

Its principal commerce consists in slaves, from eighteen to twenty thousand of whom are said to be annually exported, chiefly to the Brazils: however, the supply of these has of late considerably fallen off, for which two reasons are assigned;—one, the same as that already given at Benguela; and the other, the severe losses incurred by the principal merchants, in consequence of the dishonesty of their black agents in the country, who of late years have fallen into the practice of converting to their own use the goods furnished them by their principals for the purchase of slaves. Next to this branch of trade, the most important is that in bees'-wax, which article is procured in great quantities from the interior at a very cheap rate, and sold in Portugal and other Catholic countries at an exorbitant profit. The city possesses a few more articles of commerce, but the amount of all of them put together, with the exception of ivory, bears a very small proportion to that of either of those already mentioned.

Though the country surrounding the city is far from fertile, yet the market is tolerably well supplied, especially with fruit and vegetables. Bullocks and goats are in great number, but

dear; the former, of rather a small breed, costing us twenty dollars each. Farther inland, lions and tigers are numerous; and the rivers abound with alligators, but have not many hippopotami.

St. Paul de Loando is the chief settlement of the Portuguese on the western coast of Africa, and the governments of Benguela and Nova Redonda are dependences on it, as are also, I believe, their other possessions to the northward. The European soldiers who compose its garrison are, with few exceptions, convicts; they form rather a *corps forcé*, and are kept under the severest discipline. If they commit a crime of a grave nature, or several of minor consideration which, when summed up together, are considered equal or approximating to a capital offence, they are sent to form part of the garrison of a fort situated on the river some miles to the southward of the city, where, from the extreme unhealthiness of the spot, they seldom survive long. Should they happen to outlive a period proportionate to their degree of guilt, they are considered as having expiated their crime by running the gauntlet of death, and are accordingly recalled.

Whatever unfavourable impressions the reception which we experienced on our arrival might have produced in us, they were wholly effaced by the civility of the governor, whose table was daily attended, by specific invitation, by Captains Owen and Vidal, and a proportion of the officers of both vessels; and we were not backward in returning the compliment. The governor and his staff spent a day on board the Leven, and his officers found themselves at home in the gun-rooms of the two vessels.

The face of the country immediately about the city presents a parched, sandy appearance; the dust during a high wind rising in such clouds as to render walking in the streets, which are not paved, extremely disagreeable, especially on a hot day. The Portuguese use palanquins, the only exercise they take consisting chiefly in riding in the morning. The climate is accounted very unhealtny; the sickly seasons prevailing, the one during the months of September and October, and the other from January to May, annually carry off many of the inhabitants of the city, and of the crews of the slavers. Dysentery is the predominant disease, and it is in general very fatal in its effects.

The cliffs vary in their formation from sandstone to a parched rotten earth, of a light reddish cast, both equally embedding a quantity of shells in a fossil state, and nodules of hardened earth, resembling those so often met with in London clay, which the earth in another respect resembled, that of affording brackish water. The vicinity of the river Bengo supplies the deficiency; excellent water is daily conveyed from it to the city in tank-boats, at the rate of two Spanish dollars per ton.

On the 19th we left St. Paul de Loando with the Leven, which soon after parted from us, for the purpose of commencing her portion of the survey of the coast. We directed our course to the northward, towards the Congo, obtaining a correct survey as we went along, for which purpose we anchored every night. The country rapidly improved in appearance; it was never high, often well wooded, and varied on the coast from the low cliff to the gently shelving hill.

On Christmas-eve we entered the river Congo, and for six successive days in vain attempted to ascend it, so light was the wind which prevailed, and so overwhelming in ra-

pidity the constant outset of its waters. At length, on the 1st of January 1826, favoured by a stronger sea-breeze than usual, we succeeded in passing Shark Point, where the opposing current was ever strongest, and ascended twelve miles beyond it; and next morning six and a half farther; in all, twenty-five from the south entrance. Point Padrao is situated in latitude 6° 8′ south, and longitude 12° 7′ 42″ east.

I forbear touching on the history of the Congo, but shall merely transcribe part of my journal, written at the time, recording such observations as I had opportunities of making, and the information which I obtained from the natives during our short stay in the river, and our limited intercourse with them. The Congo at our upper anchorage was scarcely a mile and a half in breadth, and half that distance farther on there was a broad bank in the centre of it, with only five feet water on the shoalest part. On either side of this bank was a very narrow channel, close to the shore; that on the right had only seven fathoms in it; but the other, though not more than a quarter of a mile across, was in all probability of great depth, as

I could there obtain no bottom with a line of seventeen fathoms. The current set down with such velocity as to turn the heavy boat in which I was round and round, when I attempted to oppose and ascend against it. Two miles below, the brig, in crossing the river, had forty-seven fathoms.

The banks on either side above Shark Point were low and swampy, and principally covered with the mangrove, in both the forms in which it grows — the low grovelling bush, and the lofty stately tree, resting on a forest of roots, upwards of twenty feet above the ground, and often rising to the height of one hundred more. Most of them were perfectly straight; and, if the wood were a little lighter, it would be admirably adapted for masts.

The spaces between the mangroves were filled up by a variety of bushes and small trees, of beautiful and luxuriant foliage. There were also several of the palm kind, and that elegant production which resembles it in its branches, yet grows low like a reed at the river's side, and with which, as I have before mentioned, the roofs of the houses at Benguela are partly constructed. Two species of bushes bore fruit:

one resembled in taste a bitter almond, and the other, four times as large, was of a spongy nature, and had a tart, piquant flavour. The former proved a fatal poison to the handsomest macauco we had left, and a most violent emetic to some of our men, who were imprudent enough to eat of it.

Before we undertook the survey of the river, we supplied the brig with wood and water, the former from the southern bank, close off which we anchored for that purpose, and the latter from alongside. While thus employed, we were visited by several of the natives, among whom were three or four chiefs. Mafucca Rico, or the Rich Mafucca, a title bestowed on the chief of a tribe, or the governor of a district or town appointed by a king, appeared to be the greatest man amongst them. He spoke a little English, having, as he informed us, acquired it when a cabin-boy on board an English slaver some years ago. The interpreter and another chief also spoke a little English, and the greater part of the others Portuguese. Umbrellas appear to be considered as indicative of rank, for not a chief approached in his canoe without one held over his head by an attendant.

In the appearance of the natives there was nothing remarkable: some were tall, others short, all absolutely black; but they had not such flat broad noses, or lips so large, as those of the generality of Negroes.

Their clothing consists of a single wrapper of blue dungaree, or printed cloth, round their loins, with a portion of it on one side hanging down to their ankles, and in front the skin of some handsome species of monkey, or other small animal, with the tail reversed.

The chiefs, however, did not confine themselves on first coming on board to this their native attire. They were clad in sundry fantastic ways. The flowing robe of scarlet or other colours, adorned with gold lace, appeared to be the favourite garment, and also the red night-cap, as an emblem of their rank. Mafucca Rico's taster, who was very attentive in performing the duty of his office on every article of food or drink before his chief had partaken of them, afforded by his appearance much amusement. He wore an ample theatrical coat, of the old-fashioned cut of a century back, with large slashed sleeves, broad skirts, long waist, and large pockets. It was of silk, striped with

a variety of colours, and covered by a profusion of gilt tinsel fringe, somewhat soiled by time.

Although when in their native attire they were little encumbered with clothing, yet the deficiency in point of weight was amply compensated by the numerous charms or fetiches of various kinds which they carried. To these such virtues were individually ascribed, as nothing but the most profound superstition could ever have led them to imagine. It was believed that the removal of some would be attended with instant death; but others were not supposed to possess that fatal property, as was shown by Mafucca Rico, who, after the etiquette of introduction was over, carefully deposited in the hands of a dependent the most ponderous of his decorations, which was a clumsy wooden box, about five inches square, carefully secured by the profuse application of large daubs of sealing-wax. The offer to open this by one of our officers produced in the old chief the utmost trepidation, not unmixed with an expression of anger, which, however, was checked instantaneously. I could not learn what fearful event was expected to follow the opening of the box, though we were informed that

the agent shut up in it was a human bone. Among the various other fetiches worn, an iron chain, passing at different distances through pieces of wood of about the same size and shape as hens' eggs, was the most common; and none of the chiefs that I saw was without it. It passed over the right shoulder, across the heart, and under the left arm, where most of the other fetiches were placed. Among the most frequent of these were the paw of a guana, a curious sort of variegated bristles, and two whistles, resembling in form a tobacco-pipe, but used the same way, and producing the same kind of note, as a Pandean pipe. It was termed a "charm *a vento*," and was the only one of the fetiches that we saw particularly operated on, as will be hereafter related. Besides the fetiches under the left arm, few were without the garland of stout elephant hairs, knotted together, and hung round the neck.

The chief who first came on board, from the deference he paid to Mafucca Rico, appeared to be one of the second order, or a Makoombah, and combined with that title the English one of Charles King,—probably meant for King Charles. When he wished to depart, he was

very desirous to be favoured with an increased strength of the sea-breeze; and thus we had an opportunity of observing the superstitious forms employed to produce it, by means of the *à vento* whistle. He mounted the taffrail, and looking in the direction from which he well knew that the wind would soon set in, he commenced blowing his whistle, and shortly after hallooing in a loud and authoritative manner, and insisting that the wind should instantly acknowledge his summons and obey the mandate. So earnest was he that it should come, that, having obtained a wine-glassful of rum, as he said to strengthen the charm, he so far kept his word as indignantly to spirt away a little of it for the purpose, but with the keenest satisfaction he swallowed the remainder. The sea-breeze having fairly set in, Charles King discontinued his efforts, apparently not a little proud of having exhibited before us the great power which he possessed in commanding the elements.

Our object in the river appeared to our visiters somewhat ambiguous. That a vessel should arrive merely for the purpose of looking at the place, and not for trade, they would not believe; and by their conduct they evidently showed

that they imagined we were only manœuvring in order to obtain a cargo of slaves at a cheaper rate. This kind of suspicion is common to all savages, much as they may have been accustomed to Europeans. They expressed great admiration and astonishment when the various certificates they had received were read, in which the bearers were distinguished by name, together with the good qualities they possessed. One of these was signed by the unfortunate Lieutenant Hawkey, who perished in Captain Tuckey's expedition.

The brig had completed her supply of wood and water on the 3rd, and the survey of the river commenced. I was directed to proceed in the pinnace, and to trace the right bank until eight miles outside of Boolambemba Point, which may be considered as forming the northern entrance of the river. In the evening we passed it, and next morning, in the prosecution of the survey, entered a creek, outside which was an extensive shoal, uneven in its surface, over which we should be obliged to pass. A single native was standing near a hut erected on the point of the creek, and, as we approached close to it, beckoned and called to us to land.

I endeavoured to do so, but fortunately the water was too shallow to approach near enough. We had scarcely turned back to cross over the bank outside, when the man suddenly rushed into the jungle and disappeared. Little did we at the time suspect the errand on which he was gone.

We felt our way out by the creek channel, and for some distance had a tolerable depth of water: at last, however, it shoaled, and we grounded, having just before opened out from a mangrove bluff a low sandy point, with a village erected near it.

Our crew, eleven in number, jumped out and commenced tracking the boat over. While thus employed, I observed by my glass a crowd of natives running down the other side of the sandy point, apparently with the intention to embark. They had either paddles, spears, or muskets, I could not discern which, in their hands. We were less than a mile from them, the tide running strongly towards us from that direction. I felt suspicious, but kept my thoughts to myself. We had just got afloat into three or four feet water, when I observed a great number of canoes approaching from be-

hind the point, and at the same instant a second crowd of natives ran down and launched some more, which had been hauled up on the near side of it, and join them. They were twenty-eight in all, and carried from four to six men each; consequently, the force amounted to about one hundred and forty savages. With loud whooping and encouraging shouts to one another, they paddled towards us with the utmost celerity. Prompt measures were immediately taken to defend ourselves: the awning was got down, to allow room for our cutlasses to act, and for loading our muskets; and, in order to gain time, one half of the crew pulled away with oars, while the rest hoisted the sails to the light air with which the sea-breeze commenced, and charged the small arms and the brass gun. The latter, from the rapid approach of the savages, we had not time to mount forward, but were obliged to place it on the table. I fired three successive musket-shots over the canoes as a warning to keep off: they had no effect: the savages at the flash fell prostrate, and instantly rose with loud cheers, and resumed their paddles, vying with each other which should use them best, and most encou-

rage the rest by loud exulting vociferations and menacing gestures. They were nearly within pistol-shot. The contents of three muskets discharged among them they received in the same manner as they did those that were fired as a warning. The brass gun, which I had kept in reserve, I now elevated over them and discharged; for, as I had learned that these people were of a harmless disposition, I was averse to proceed to extremities with them until absolutely compelled. They cheered when the gun was fired, but appeared not to be daunted by it. Half measures were now out of the question: a well-aimed volley of musketry was poured among them, and they retreated in the utmost consternation. The breeze had increased; I luffed the boat up, and bade them adieu with a charge of grape from the gun, which, I have every reason to believe, told well.

The depth of water was too shallow for me to venture in for the purpose of punishing them still farther for their hostility. They had received a lesson, and it is to be hoped that the boats of the natives, which they often seize, may hereafter profit by it. To the nature of the place in which they sallied upon us,

and the falling tide, but not the feelings of the boat's crew, the midshipmen, or myself, they are indebted for their escape from a severe retribution.

From the appearance of the dwellings of these people, I imagined at first that they were the temporary erections of a party detached from a surrounding tribe; however, I afterwards learned that they were not. Some were in the usual cottage style, but by far the greater number consisted of a square frame of interwoven reeds and bushes, resting with one end on the ground and the other on a couple of stakes. The sloping of the frame was always turned inland, as if from that quarter alone wet weather was to be expected.

The great body of water discharged by the Congo has scooped out for itself a channel, narrow but immensely deep. Above Shark Point it was seldom more than a mile across, and varied in depth, that is, where we succeeded in getting a bottom, from one hundred and thirty fathoms off the point to forty-five at our highest anchorage. Outside the deep channel, it was from two and a half to three miles across; we seldom got soundings in it, and in

one part could not succeed with two hundred fathoms of line, though a boat was lowered down for the purpose, and always pulled against the stream, so as to keep the line exactly up and down; for the strongest rush of the current was only superficial, so that a boat would ride to it with a scope of line out as if dragging her anchor, and the brig's progress, when drifting out in a calm, was so much retarded by the current below, that the superficial one went past her at the rate of upwards of a mile and a half an hour. Its real velocity over the ground was about four, and, opposite to Shark Point, five miles. In shallow water, however, it was considerably less; and, in some parts of the Morna Morsa flat, the flood-tide made head against it: the rise of the tide, even in the deep channel, was evident, though the superficial current ran over it.

Our limited time would not allow us to trace out to sea the deep channel of the Congo more than thirteen miles beyond Cape Padrao, at which distance the greatest depth we had was forty-five fathoms. Hence it appears that the channel does not eventually communicate with the depths of the sea without a bar, though in

all likelihood there may be upwards of twenty fathoms water upon it. Even at the above-mentioned distance, on crossing the channel, we found the water fresh in the river: it is always so, except where the flood prevails against the currents. It was of a dingy red colour, and, a few days after we had taken it on board, fermented and for some time remained in a highly putrid state. A silver tea-spoon, when immersed in it for half an hour, contracted a tint resembling light-coloured japan, and which required much cleaning to remove. A bottle of it which I preserved lost its colour, and became perfectly clear in four months: I could not even perceive a sediment.

Floating islands passed us every day; they were never large, and were formed of rushes, reeds, and long grass: when covered by birds, they had a very remarkable appearance; but this is rarely the case, for, as far as we proceeded, the feathered tribes seemed to be far from numerous in the Congo.

Two species of eagle were the most common birds: one of grey plumage, and the other black, excepting the breast, neck, and head, which were white. Besides these we saw

pelicans, wild Muscovy ducks, gulls, white cranes, parrots, and kingfishers, of the same species as those on the east coast; namely, white spotted with black, and having long straight sharp-pointed bills. We saw no quadruped but one small alligator. The country at the mouth of the Congo is extremely pleasing, and apparently very fertile; clumps of trees adorn the range of the higher land, which, at a short distance inland, follows the course of the river, and the intermediate flat, ending outside Boolambemba Point in a range of cliffs, is covered at the water's edge by groves, detached trees, and grass upwards of six feet in length."

CHAPTER XI.

Difficulties opposed to our Survey of the West Coast of Africa.—Departure from the Congo.—Kabende Bay.—Goy.—Prince Jack and his Daughters.—Pirates of the Mouth of the Congo.—Scenery.—Idea of the White Men.—Anecdote of Lieutenant Hawkey.—Loango Bay and its beautiful Scenery.—Notions concerning Men-of-war.—Cape Lopez.—Visit to King Passol.—His House.—Fetiche Dance.—River Gaboon.—Tradesmen.—Tom Qua Ben and Case Glass.—The Women.—Harmless Battles.—Fetiche House.—Narrow Escape of the Prince of Parrot Island.—Huts.—Trade.—Native Boats.

In no part of the survey had the unfitness of the Barracouta's build for stowing provisions been so much felt as in that of the West coast. We commenced it, an extent of more than one thousand miles,* with only thirteen weeks'

* This merely includes that portion of the coast that we were specifically ordered to survey. By the united efforts of all three vessels, the remainder, from the Congo to the Cape of Good Hope, has in great part been obtained. Of course we were obliged to pass the harbours along it without examination.

provisions on board. It is true that we might meet with vessels which probably could supply us with more; yet that was a mere chance, and could not be allowed to affect our operations, or to induce us to prolong our stay on the coast in order to examine more accurately an extent of it, which, though abounding in rivers resorted to by our ships for trade, is comparatively little known in a hydrographical point of view. From the difficulties opposed to us, comprising shortness of time and of provisions, tediousness of coast navigation for surveying purposes, and the loss from fever of our ablest assistants, we were obliged to use the utmost exertion in order to complete the survey as we did. With the exception of the frequented portion of the rivers Gaboon and Bonny, and the extensive bay of Korisco, which were accurately surveyed, we were forced to content ourselves with a very limited, yet, as far as it went, correct examination.

We could not, under these circumstances, give much time to the survey of the river Congo; therefore, on the 5th of January, we left it, and two days afterwards anchored in Kabende Bay; the intermediate coast, a distance of

thirty-six miles from Boolambemba Point, being low near the shore, sometimes terminating in a cliff, and at a little distance inland rising into a rather high and sloping ridge of park-like land. The low lands likewise presented a most fertile appearance, abounding in groves of trees, among which the palm was conspicuous.

By the sudden turning back of the plain to the high land, the shallow bay of Kabende is formed, answering sufficiently well in so mild a climate for an anchorage, but far too open to be safe in a more boisterous one. It is principally resorted to by slavers, five of which, one French and the rest under the Brazilian flag, were at anchor there when we arrived.

The numerous huts that skirt the bay in groups, and also in some parts extend inland on the rise of the hills, can scarcely be considered as forming a town, but rather an assemblage of villages, each governed by a Mafucca, and the whole under the superintendence of Prince Jack, next heir to the king, whose capital is Goy, a large town situated about six miles inland, and containing, according to the account of the natives, an immense population ; a cir-

cumstance which I am not disposed to doubt, for never did I observe in passing, except in civilized countries, a coast so thickly inhabited. We had not been long at anchor, when a native boat came alongside, the master of which was sent out by Prince Jack to ascertain who we were. He was entertained for a short time on board, and then returned to acquaint his chief that we had called for stock, and requested his services in ordering it to be furnished, for without his permission it could not be obtained; and to present kind wishes to him from a merchant at the Cape, who, before the suppression of the slave-trade, had often visited Kabende. We were obliged to give this man two bottles of rum before he would quit us; for, without that, he strongly affirmed that it would be in vain to speak to Prince Jack, who would not believe a word he said. The boat soon came back, bringing the prince, who evidently, from the intimation he had received respecting the merchant, imagined that a present was awaiting him. The disappointment of the old man was most ludicrously expressed when a card only, with the name of his acquaintance on it, was presented to him. With a sour look, he

turned it over and over, and then, replacing it on the table, uttered in a half-satirical, half-disappointed tone, "Is that all he send?"

With Prince Jack came six of his daughters. These furnished a favourable sample of the women of the West coast, being of large stature, with pleasing, intelligent countenances, and figures whose symmetry was far above mediocrity. They were all highly scented, and clad in fancy-coloured cloths of English manufacture, secured round the middle and hanging down to their ankles. A piece of the same kind was likewise thrown carelessly over the shoulders, and their bosoms were in general covered. They wore various ornaments, but bangles appeared to be in the highest favour. Some were tattooed on the stomach and back in a neat and tasteful manner; and it was intimated to us, that females thus adorned were greatly preferred by the men. The latter appeared to be a fine race; some of them were slightly tattooed, and their costume resembled that of the Congo people, though their language was wholly different.

Prince Jack was apparently upwards of fifty years old, and good-humoured in his manner.

He affected much dignity, yet without making himself troublesome. Doubtless he preferred spirits to wine, yet he appeared to think it most becoming his rank to drink the latter at supper, and accordingly kept entirely to it; and, what surprised us a little, he did not take much, but chose to retire at a rather early hour to the bed which we had made up for him. He could not be prevailed on to eat pork—not that he disliked it, but because none of the royal family was allowed by the laws of the country to touch it.

The Kabende people, in speaking of the natives at the mouth of the Congo, term them a horde of pirates, who, if they thought they could entrap a passing boat, would pounce out upon it with an overwhelming force of twenty or thirty canoes; and who, if she were manned by Blacks, would kill those by whom they could expect to gain nothing, and either sell the rest as slaves, or keep them to be ransomed by their friends at a most extravagant price. Should she be manned by Whites, their treatment would depend much on caprice. If they made resistance, death would be inflicted on them in the rage of the moment; but if their

lives were preserved, they would be stripped naked, forced to procure their own food in what manner they could, and kept at hard labour in the performance of the most menial duties. Sometimes they would permit them to be ransomed; but it is probable that such a case rarely occurs; for, should a White return to tell the story, and point out their haunts, it is more than likely that they would be made severely to rue their conduct.

I was told that a Portuguese boat was once seized by these unfriendly people, set on fire, and destroyed, together with the crew in her; but, had such an affair taken place, I should think it would have been more generally known, and therefore I do not believe the story.

The launches of the natives, which these savages are constantly on the watch to entrap, are purchased from Europeans, principally Portuguese, through St. Paul de Loando, for the purpose of coast traffic, in collecting from the villages up the creeks, and the small ports along shore, slaves and other articles of trade, for which vessels resort to the large harbours. Most of them are of considerable size, and they are seldom manned with fewer than

twenty Blacks, principally slaves. They carry from one to two short guns of large calibre, besides musketry; yet, in all likelihood, even when they venture to defend themselves against the canoes, their crews are so awkward in the management of them, that the first discharge alone is to be dreaded. Such an inference may be drawn from the fact that, in the attempt on me, as soon as the savages perceived that the first defensive operations, which they treated with contempt, were only a prelude to more effective measures, they retreated in disorder.

A native launch, properly defended, would in most circumstances set at defiance the greatest force of canoes that could possibly be mustered to attack her. Those launches that we saw in the Congo always carefully avoided intercourse with the shore, and were never observed to anchor in the vicinity of the villages. The goods which they carry for the purpose of trade are the strongest allurement, and next to that the ransom of the crews, or the produce of their sale as slaves. The character of the people at the entrance of the Congo, as given by the natives of Kabende, perfectly agreed

with what we afterwards heard of them, as we proceeded along to the northward. Those inhabiting the banks of the river, a little way up, were described, as Captain Tuckey found them, a harmless, inoffensive race.

The scenery in Kabende Bay is very pretty, varying from the lofty cliff to the gently shelving hill and deep luxurious vale. The trees present great variety in size and species, and are dispersed in almost every situation that can tend to render the whole appearance of the country picturesque and pleasing. It is impossible for a vessel touching for a few hours, as we did, at Kabende, to obtain stock; for it is an article of trade of such inferior consequence to slaves, ivory, or red wood, that few engage in it, and indeed those only who have not means to engage in any other traffic. These people reside in the country, and great delay takes place, even after they have received information, through the Mafucca, of the arrival of a vessel requiring stock, before they bring any in; and then the articles in exchange —for money they will not take—must be sent on shore, and the different bargains concluded there.

We were surprised to find that they had no bullocks; however, the deficiency is partly supplied by the numerous herds of buffaloes that range the forest in a wild state. They are so savage and desperate as seldom to be taken alive; but, whenever there is a demand for them, they are hunted down and shot. Sheep are scarce, but of goats they have abundance, as also ducks and fowls, but so dear, that two fathoms of dungaree, equivalent to as many dollars, was only adequate to the purchase of three fowls.

The Kabende people make use, for common purposes, and for the slaves, of a native grass-cloth, woven by the Bushmen Negroes of the interior. It much resembles that manufactured by the Malegasch for the Isle of France market, for packages and the like. These Negroes the Kabende people affect to despise, but, I think, unjustly; as a couple of silver chains of their making, which I saw, were highly creditable to their ingenuity and industry. The Kabende people, having the European market at hand, appear entirely to neglect manufactures; but, should they lose that resource, they would, I suspect, serve to illustrate the fable of the rich

man and the basket-maker, and then learn to appreciate an acquirement which they, superior as they consider themselves at present, do not possess.

As a contrast to the contempt in which they hold the Bushmen, I shall relate an anecdote of the admiration which they entertain for the Whites. Prince Jack was sitting and conversing with Capt. Vidal, when some specimens of mechanism, watches, sextants, and other instruments, arrested his attention. He examined such of them as he had never seen before with the most intent curiosity, and, after a pause of silent admiration, turned to Capt. Vidal, and exclaimed, not as if merely in flattery, but with an earnestness that betokened sincerity: "Cappen, suppose Kabende man no see white man die, e tink e no ebery ting!" thereby wishing to intimate that, had not his countrymen seen that white men died like themselves, they would have supposed that they were immortal, and beings of a superior order.

I shall conclude the subject of Kabende with the relation of a circumstance that occurred on board the Congo, when she visited that place,

previously to ascending the river. One of the principal of the Mafuccas, a very fine-looking young man, paid her a visit, and, in the course of conversation, let slip that the Portuguese had been instilling into the minds of the natives, that the Congo, and the transport which accompanied her, had been sent out by the British government to examine the Zaire and the country around, with a view to take possession of it. "Do it," added the Mafucca, "do it: I know it is in your power, as it was in that of the Portuguese; but, like them, you will soon have it retaken from you. Twice they were our masters — they are no longer so; twice they erected a fort — the ruins alone remain."

Lieut. Hawkey, observing the self-complacent tone in which this was uttered, laughed, and remarked, that were the English silly enough to take possession of so wretched a country, (a term at which the Mafucca was highly indignant), they would with the utmost ease maintain themselves in their sovereignty over it, in spite of every effort that the natives might make to expel them. "Here," continued he, "you have been asking me for a

cutlass for the last ten minutes: you cannot want it, for you know not how to use it. With this small rapier," pointing to his dress-sword, " I would set you and your cutlass at defiance." The Mafucca treated the observation with the utmost contempt, and, glowing with indignation, offered to put the matter immediately to the test.

Mr. Hawkey had been some years a prisoner in France, and was a perfect master in the use of the small-sword. To punish the Mafucca's arrogance, he accepted the challenge. The cutlass, in its rapid and deadly-meant evolutions, was turned as harmlessly aside by the well-handled rapier, as if no eye had directed the movements, and no force its blow. The lieutenant was cool and in strength; the Mafucca, foaming with fury and almost sinking from debility: the contrast strongly demonstrated the superiority of cool scientific knowledge over impotent rage. The affair was closed by a slight puncture of the skin of the Mafucca's shoulder. By that time he had begun to perceive the inutility of his efforts and the folly of his conduct; he gave up the contest, shook hands, and ever afterwards, while

the Congo was there, continued on the most friendly terms with all on board, and never ceased to express his admiration of Mr. Hawkey's skill, and respect for the British nation. His people, who witnessed the contest, although they were very apprehensive for their chieftain's safety, yet could not suppress a continued exclamation of admiration and astonishment.

On the afternoon of the 8th, we quitted Kabende Bay, and next morning arrived in that of Loango, of which the point to the southward that forms it is in latitude 4° 39′ 29″ south, and longitude 11° 40′ 39″ east. It affords excellent shelter for small vessels, and even for a large one is far preferable to Kabende Bay. The scenery is likewise more varied and interesting, though the habitations of the numerous population, which would heighten and enliven the effect, are, from the custom of the country, withdrawn from the sea-view, and embowered in the impervious luxuriance that crowns the low lands, covers the sides of the hills, and caps their summit.

This custom of the natives of erecting their villages where they cannot be seen from the

sea, and which is, generally speaking, diametrically opposite to the practice on the East coast, owes its origin, I should imagine, to the kidnapping system of contraband slavers in former times. Shortly after we arrived, we sent a boat on board an English sloop lying there, the Harford of Liverpool; several natives were on board her at the time, but when the boat approached, and they were apprized that it belonged to a man-of-war, they retreated to the shore in their canoes in the utmost consternation. They have heard of their fights, and know that they seize slaves; but, ignorant of the reason why they do so, they hold them in great dread, and imagine that their crews are rogues who seize indiscriminately all vessels that they meet with. The general question respecting "war-ships," as they term them, was "War-ship no make trade—no dash notting (give no presents)—sail ebery where — look ebery ting—ab plainty gun—plainty white man —eatee too much—What e do?" The only way in which I could ever make them perfectly understand their use, was by supposing, for example, that the Mafucca, or any other chief, had several boats that he wished to send

with various articles of merchandise, to barter for slaves or other commodities along the coast; with these, if they were of value, he would send means of defence, and another boat, entirely adapted for that purpose, would be of more effect and less expense than separately arming each of the traders. Such were war-ships. This explanation was always sufficient, and in general drew forth great encomiums: in one instance, the querist, after mature deliberation, observed "King George very great king — e sabbey too much."

In the course of the survey of the bay I had occasion to land twice or three times, and was always immediately surrounded by a crowd of the natives, who were very friendly in their conduct, and betrayed the utmost curiosity in their numerous questions respecting war-ships. Wherever I landed, I found a creek or narrow lagoon inland running parallel with the shore, about thirty fathoms from it, and communicating with the sea in various places by drains or small creeks. This appears to be a remarkable feature in the coast near the Congo: we found it in many parts the same, and farther to the southward it existed on a grander scale.

We quitted Loango on the 10th, and, in the course of our survey towards Cape Lopez, were often visited by the natives, who differed not from those of Kabende, excepting that the monkey's skin worn in front was dispensed with. They came off in large canoes, with either an English ensign or white flag flying, and were always anxious for us to stop and trade with them. Soon after we left the bay, the hilly scenery which we so much admired at Loango was succeeded by a low, woody, and in general swampy flat, in many parts of which we could see from our masthead extensive lagoons, communicating with the sea by large creeks and rivers, whose continuations inland were often visible on the opposite side. Shoal water prevailed along the coast until we reached Cape Lopez, on the evening of the 17th, when it suddenly became very deep, even close to the shore, insomuch that, in rounding the point and standing in towards the beach inside, we could not obtain an anchoring depth till within a quarter of a mile of the surf.

Cape Lopez, or Lopez de Gonzales, (probably from its first discoverer,) is in latitude 36′ 6″

south, and longitude 8° 39′ 3″ east. It is low, woody, and swampy, as is also the neighbouring country. The extensive bay which it forms, fourteen miles in depth, has several rivers and creeks, all very shallow, running into it; some of which, to the southward, apparently communicate with the extensive lagoons already mentioned. On the left point of the largest and northernmost river is situated King Passol's town, the only assemblage of huts in the bay. Off this, and near a French slaver, we anchored, on the 25th of January. Captain Vidal repaired on shore to obtain observations for rating the chronometers, and I accompanied him for the purpose of examining the town, and calling on King Passol. A chief, who styled himself a duke, led the way; but, as on our arrival the king was not prepared to see me immediately, I was taken to the house occupied by the master of the slaver, whom I found busily engaged in paying away various goods which filled the dwelling.

This house, with the rest of the buildings which composed the town, resembled in shape an English cottage, and was formed of the leaves of the palm neatly interwoven into a

slight wooden frame. There was no boarded floor, but the earth within was raised about a foot above that on the outside, and coated with clay of the finest quality. The doors were covered with fanciful designs, and the eaves projected sufficiently to form a pleasant shelter from the heat of the sun. The duke, who had quitted me, soon returned, with the information that his majesty awaited my arrival. He led the way and I followed, passing through the extensive and straggling town, at times almost up to my ankles in sand, from which the vegetation was worn off by the constant passing and repassing of the inhabitants.

We soon arrived at the large folding-doors in the high bamboo and palm-tree fence enclosing the king's establishment, leaving on our right, as we entered, two old honeycombed guns, dismounted, yet probably, according to the practice along the coast, fired off at times to attract the attention of passing vessels, and to notify to them that the place was one where traffic might be carried on. After entering the enclosure, on the left appeared a shed, with a large ship's bell suspended under it, serving to give alarm in case of danger. The remain-

der of the enclosed space was occupied by a number of neatly-built huts, inhabited by the numerous wives of King Passol, whose residence in the rear was rendered immediately conspicuous above the rest by the difference in its construction and its superior size.

Whether it proceeded from affectation of dignity or not, I cannot say—but, when I had arrived at the king's door, he was not forthcoming, though he had sent to notify to me that he was ready to receive me; and it was intimated that I might remain where I was (outside) until he required my attendance. I waited about a quarter of an hour, and then was on the point of going back, in spite of the entreaties of the duke, when Captain Vidal entered, and presently we ascended together, by means of an awkward temporary ladder, to the first floor of King Passol's residence. There we found him sitting at his table, with his hat on, and clothed in a loose flowing garment of striped blue and white cloth. He was a tall, muscular, ugly-looking Black, apparently about fifty years of age. His appearance by no means indicated a bad temper, although I have heard it said that he rules with despotic sway, and

at times makes free with the heads of his subjects. He understood French and English well, although he could speak but little of either: however, he had his interpreter, who amply made up for the deficiency.

Captain Vidal explained our object in visiting the bay, and demanded permission for the inhabitants to bring off refreshments for the ship's company, which the prince readily vouchsafed, stating that he entertained a great respect for the English, and a wish to have as much trade as possible with them. A decanter of rum, a jug of water, and some tumblers, on a waiter, were placed on the table, and shortly afterwards a plate of burnt ground-nuts and another of field plantains. The compliment of mutually drinking healths was passed, the king first helping Captain Vidal and then himself, leaving it to one of his chiefs to serve me and the principal of his people present.

Previously to our arrival we had heard much of Passol's house, of which the natives took great pains to impress us with a high notion, describing it as "a ver fine biggy house, and ab got two deck"—that is, it had a ground-floor and a story above it. The building certainly

surpassed my anticipations; for, well knowing how partial savages are to magnify in description anything appertaining to their chiefs, I merely expected to find a residence in a slight degree surpassing the general style of the rest of the huts. But this really was a most creditable specimen of the ingenuity of one of the natives, a man totally uninstructed, yet who, by his talent and observation on board the ships which he had visited, had raised a structure that would have done honour to many a house-carpenter in a country village in England. It was about fifty feet long and twenty-five in width; and, though yet unfinished, was advancing towards its completion. The frame-work was principally of hard wood of the country; but the planking was of fir, brought out by his desire in an English vessel expressly for that purpose. The nails and other iron-work were all manufactured by the same ingenious carpenter.

The fitting up of the ground-floor had advanced but little; but the upper floor had already begun to assume a very respectable appearance. It was divided into two large rooms, one about thirty-four feet in length, and the other sixteen. The former, in which were two

closets, used as bed-rooms, was hung with looking-glasses, from the largest to the smallest size, and a profusion of prints and water-colour paintings, varying from those that would not have disgraced the first print-shop in England to the common tinsel-framed daub retailed by a pedlar. The furniture consisted of a large mahogany table, covered by a new green cloth, a number of old-fashioned English chairs, and some stools of the fashion of the country, hewn out of a solid block of a soft kind of wood, and carved with a variety of uncouth devices. The doors and windows, which were both made to turn upon hinges, appeared to owe their style to the architect's observation of the gratings of a ship and the lattice-work of her stern; they were constructed with a degree of elegance by a confused mixture of the two, which, with their generally arched top, gave to the whole a neat and tasteful effect.

There was, however, no part of the building that attracted our attention so much as the roof: it was an elegant refinement on the native mode of constructing that part of the huts, without bordering on the more substantial method adopted by civilized natives. It con-

sisted of a complete basketwork, framed by the rectangular crossing of the branches of the palm with leaves of the same, neatly interwoven in several layers.

While Captain Vidal and I were expressing our admiration of this piece of work, Passol, who appeared to be smitten with the mania of prizing the productions and fashions of other countries merely because they were foreign, and contemning those of his own, turned a careless look of contemptuous indifference from the roof, and drily observed, "Dat notting; bye bye you come back, you look um nudder (another) deck."

When the purport of our voyage was understood to be the facilitating of commerce, the king was much pleased, and earnestly requested that we would give a book (chart) of Cape Lopez to all merchant-vessels we met, and tell them that King Passol was a very great and good man, and had plenty of ivory, redwood, ebony, gum copal, and wax, to dispose of.

An English boy, about fourteen, who had been beaten by his master for theft, deserted the vessel at Cape Lopez, and, receiving protection from the natives, could not be prevailed upon

to return. He had been upwards of a year there when we arrived, spoke the language fluently, and in manners and customs had assimilated himself to the natives to such a degree as to go about, like the younger portion of them, in a naked state. Captain Vidal demanded him of the king, who, although after some time he consented that he should go, could by no means be prevailed upon to order his arrest, or to assist in it. The boy himself appeared to be so partial to the life which he led, and so determined to remain unless absolutely carried away by force, that it was considered best to let him stop where he was.

A little before noon, Captain Vidal took leave of the king, in order to prosecute his observations. I remained, but shortly afterwards prepared to leave also. Passol, however, as soon as he perceived my intention, jumped up, and in a good-humoured way detaining me by the arm, exclaimed, "No go, no go yet; top a little; bye bye you look 'um fetiche dance; me mak you too much laugh." It appeared that the old man had heard me some time before, on listening to the distant tattoo of a native drum, express a determination to the

young midshipman who was with me to go presently to see the dance, with which I had little doubt that it was accompanied.

The noise of the drum, almost drowned by the singing, whooping, and clamour of a multitude of the natives, was soon heard approaching. When close to us, the procession stopped, and the dancers, all of whom were men, ranged themselves in parallel lines from the front of an adjoining house, and commenced their exhibition. They were especially dressed for the purpose, having suspended from their hips a complete kilt, formed of threads of the grass-cloth manufactured by the natives of the interior, and likewise an appendage of the same kind to one or both arms, just above the elbows. Some had their faces and others their breasts marked with white balls, or lines, given to them by the fetiche as a cure or safeguard against some disease which they either had or dreaded.

The dancing, although not elegant, was free from that wriggling and contortion of body so common on the East coast. It consisted principally in alternately advancing and drawing back the feet and arms, together with a corre-

sponding inclination of the body, and at stated times the simultaneous clapping of hands, and a loud sharp ejaculation of "Heigh!" Although I have remarked that it was not elegant, yet it was pleasing, from the regularity with which it was accompanied.

There were two men who did not dance in the line among the rest, but shuffled around, and at times threaded the needle among them: one was termed the master fetiche, and the other appeared to be his attendant; neither wore the fancy dress, but they were both encircled by the usual wrapper round the loins. The former had on a French glazed hat, held in great request by the natives; and the other, chewing some root of a red colour, carried a small ornamented stick, surmounted at the end, like a brush, with a bunch of long and handsome feathers. At times, one of these men would stop opposite to a particular individual among the dancers, and entice him by gesture to leave the line, and accompany him in his evolutions, which finally always ended where they began, the pressed man returning to his former place. For some time I had observed the master fetiche dancing opposite to the

house, and with many gesticulations apparently addressing it in a half-threatening, half-beseeching tone. Old Passol, who was standing close by me, suddenly exclaimed, "Now you laugh too much. Fetiche e come."

Sure enough, forthwith rushed from the house among the dancers a most extraordinary figure. It was a man mounted on stilts at least six feet above the ground, of which, from practice, he had acquired so great a command, that he certainly was as nimble in his evolutions as the most active among the dancers. He was sometimes so quick, that one stilt could hardly be seen to touch the earth before it was relieved by the other. Even when standing still, he often balanced himself so well as not to move either stilt for the space of two or three minutes. He wore a white mask, with a large red ball on each cheek, the same on his chin, and his eyebrows and the lower part of his nose were painted with the same colour. Over his forehead was a sort of vizor, of a yellow colour, having across it a line of small brass bells: it was armed in front by long alligators' teeth, and terminated in a confused display of feathers, blades of grass, and the stiff hairs of

elephants and other large animals. From the top of his head the skin of a monkey hung pendent behind, having affixed to its tail a wire and a single elephant's hair, with a large sheep's bell attached to the end. The skin was of a beautiful light green, with the head and neck of a rich vermilion. From his shoulders a fathom of blue dungaree, with a striped white border, hung down behind; and his body, legs, and arms were completely enshrouded in a number of folds of the native grass-cloth, through which he grasped in each hand a quantity of alligators' teeth, lizards' skins, fowls' bones, feathers, and stiff hairs, reminding me strongly of the well-known attributes of Obi, the dread of the slave-owners of Jamaica.

The fetiche never spoke. When standing still he held his arms erect, and shook and nodded his head with a quick repetition: but, when advancing, he extended them to their full length before him. In the former case, he appeared as if pointing to heaven, and denouncing its vengeance on the dancers and the numerous bystanders around; and in the latter, as one who, finding his exhortations of no avail, was resolved to exterminate, in the might of

his gigantic stature and superior strength, the refractory set. The master fetiche was his constant attendant, always following, doubling, and facing him, with exhortations, uttered at one minute in the most beseeching tone, accompanied hat in hand by obsequious bows, and, in the next, by threatening gestures and violent passionate exclamations. The attendant on the master fetiche was likewise constantly at hand, with his stick applied to his mouth, and, in one or two instances, when the masquerader approached, he crouched close under him, and squirted the red juice of the root he was chewing into his face.

For upwards of an hour I watched the dance, yet the fetiche appeared untired; and I afterwards heard that the same ceremony was performed every day, and sometimes lasted three or four hours. I at first thought that it was merely got up for our amusement, but was soon undeceived; and when, under the first impression, I inquired of a bystander what man it was who performed the character, he answered, with a mixture of pique at the question and astonishment at my ignorance, "He no man; no man do same as him; e be de

diable, e be de devil." Still I was a little sceptic as to their really holding this belief themselves, though they insisted on the fact as they represented it to me; and therefore, after I had received the same answer from all, I used to add in a careless way, to try their sincerity, "In what house does he dwell?" "What! what! Fetiche, I tell you, be devil; e no catch house; e lib (live) in dat wood," pointing to a gloomy-looking grove skirting the back of the village. It was in vain that I attempted to unravel the origin or meaning of this superstition: to all my questions the only answer I could obtain was, that such was the fashion of the country—a reason which they always had at hand when puzzled, as they always were when the subject related to any of their numerous superstitions. The fact is, that these practices still remain, though their origin has long since been buried in oblivion.

I can say but little of the general character of the Cape Lopez people: instances occurred which told strongly against them. Two of our men, in their way to the town, were hustled at different times by them: one had his handkerchief forcibly taken from his neck, and the

other his knife, which, however, by perseverance he succeeded in regaining.

Our efforts to obtain stock were ineffectual; for various trinkets, which we found serviceable in exchanging for supplies on the East coast, were here either of no, or, at least, of very trifling value. Printed cloth was what they required, and of that we had none, although plenty of blue dungaree, which they held in contempt. Our crew were in consequence indebted to the merest chance for the only fresh meat which they obtained since we quitted St. Paul de Loando. As we approached Cape Lopez, we observed at times straggling buffaloes pacing along the beach; and on our arrival we were informed that the country abounded with them in a wild state. A strict look-out was therefore kept, and, the evening after our arrival, two large animals, apparently of that species, were observed issuing from the thickets and reclining on the sandy shore. Dr. Guland immediately proceeded in a boat, with a double-barrel gun, to shoot them. He landed at a short distance, and, carefully approaching under favour of the bushes, succeeded in passing a ball through the head of one, and wounding

the other, which, however, had sufficient strength to retreat to the woods and escape. The one shot was the female, not of the buffalo species, but exactly resembling the common cow of England, excepting that its proportions were far more elegant. The flesh was tender in the extreme, and well-flavoured.

On the 27th, we quitted Cape Lopez, and prosecuted our survey to the northward. The coast varied in appearance, was often swampy, not high, and, though covered with wood, never presented a pleasing appearance. We arrived off the southern point of the River Gaboon, situated in latitude 21° 38′ north, and longitude 9° 15′ 12″ east, on the 29th. Several native boats approached us, but, on our firing, in order to gain a base by sound for our operations, they retreated in consternation. We followed them next day, anchored late at night, and in the morning were visited by a tall, stout-looking native, who designated himself Tom Qua Ben, brother to King Qua Ben, whose capital, an extensive town, was situated on the northern bank of the river, not far from the spot where we had anchored. Tom Qua Ben was dressed in the laced coat of a mail-

coach guard, and, from his well-favoured and portly appearance, did credit to the character.

The reports made by the crews of the boats which retreated from us, together with our, to them, unaccountable manœuvring outside in surveying, as well as the number of boats we had and their employment, had created great alarm; and Tom Qua Ben, immediately on his arrival, emphatically observed, "You go here, you go dere; you send boat ebery where. Gaboun man look um dat, too much fear. Who you be?" The question was as quickly answered as it was directly put, and the fears of Tom Qua Ben were set at rest. As he was the first on board, he was very solicitous to be chosen captain's tradesman, producing certificates of the faithfulness with which he had acted in that capacity for various masters of merchantmen who had visited the place. These tradesmen, as they term themselves, are the principal inhabitants, and are intrusted by masters of merchant-vessels with goods, to purchase, through others, such returns from the Bullamen, or natives of the interior, as they require.

A man or woman is always delivered up as

an hostage for the honesty of their proceedings, and as these are natives of the place and generally related to the tradesmen, whatever may be their disposition, they cannot act a dishonest part. They always make the vessel their head-quarters, act as interpreters to the masters, and in that capacity, as well as a guard, often accompany him and his mate in their visits to the shore. They are impudent beggars, and will get all they can from their employers, yet allow no one else to annoy them. Tom Qua Ben attached himself to me as tradesman, for Captain Vidal chose Case Glass, half-brother to Tom, and related equally to King Glass and King Qua Ben. He was rather elderly, spoke English fluently, and was preferred for two qualifications which seldom fall to the lot of savages—a mild manner, and a low tone when speaking.

The natives of Gaboon are a fine-looking race of people, and, from their intercourse with Europeans, far surpass in intelligence those of the East coast. The fluency with which many speak English is astonishing : so general is the knowledge of our language, that, among the many who daily came on board, scarcely one

was found who did not at least understand us. This accomplishment is confined to the males alone, and appears to be a part of their education.

The women do not speak English, though, for the sake of what trifle they can procure for their husbands by bartering their favours, they are in the habit of flocking in numbers on board the different vessels which visit the river and will permit them to remain.

With the exception of the first wife, to whom even in age a preference is given, the women are little better than slaves. They are obliged, whether they consent or not, to grant their favours to whomsoever their husbands choose; they are bought in marriage like slaves, and from the number that a man has his wealth is computed. They cultivate the ground, and perform the menial domestic offices, while the husband smokes his pipe, or idly lounges away his time in conversation: but when he has an opportunity for trade, he is all activity. The construction of houses, the making of furniture, and boat-building, are likewise the occupations of those men whose trades they are. The management of the boats is also their province, by which means some few among them

take a share at times in the labour of fishing. They use a slender cane, about ten feet long, armed at the end with a barbed piece of iron, which, on entering the fish, detaches itself from the shaft, that rises to the surface of the water, and there serves as a buoy. The supply procured in this manner by the men falls, however, as much short in quantity as it is exceeded in labour by that which the women procure on shore. During the night, they resort at dead low water in crowds to the reefs, carrying a lighted stick in one hand and a barbed spear in the other: the fish, attracted by the former, approach and fall victims to the latter.

The natives in their broils use the knife, and gash each other about in various parts, but carefully avoid inflicting a mortal wound, as the relatives of the deceased, in that case, never allow the murderer to escape. The knives are manufactured by the Bullamen, and are of various construction. In length they differ from six to ten and even more inches, and in breadth from two to four. They are pointed extremely sharp, and broadest in the middle. The handles are curiously carved, and the sheaths covered either with thin brass, the hides

of beasts, or snake-skin. In fighting with them, they dance about, watch their adversary's eye, rush in, and, in a back-handed way, bring the knife sharply up and inflict the wound.

Spears are in use, but in their wars they principally fight with the musket, yet in a manner ridiculous enough. Case Glass and others of the natives, as well as the master of the English brig trading in the river, assured me, when speaking of the late war between Kings Glass and George, that in their principal battle, which lasted nearly four hours, only one man was killed. I looked surprised, and they equally so—not that the circumstance was a strange one, but that I should think it such. "No ab too much plainty man here: what for we go them kill um? No, no; we make bob (bobbery, noise), no too much kill man." Even to this harmless warfare only the lowest order of the natives are liable to be exposed; the rest consider it unbecoming their rank, and quietly remain at home with their wives. I should not, however, imagine that this custom is generally adopted: in the late misunderstanding, it probably might be from the mutual family connexions existing between the contending

parties, who on that account, although they disagreed, were averse to proceed to active hostilities, where the object sought could be obtained by threats.

A native, when he wishes to add another wife to his establishment, formally demands her of her father, to whom, if he does not give one of his own daughters in exchange, which is often the case, he pays a certain amount of sorted goods, fixed as to quantity by custom, according to the qualifications of the girl. These are in general maintained in clothing by the proceeds of their intercourse with the Whites. Though this is by no means considered dishonourable in the women, still, by an established law, the child resulting from such a connexion, if a female, is not allowed to marry, but may grant her favours as she pleases. A wretched and degrading lot for a mother to anticipate for her child! From the consideration of this circumstance, as well as from the fact that I never saw man, woman, or child, who apparently was the offspring of a White, I draw the conclusion that in general, perhaps always, such infants are destroyed as soon as born, or that abortion is procured, as at New Zealand, Delagoa, and pro-

bably many more places. A male born under the above circumstances they affirm to be liable to no restrictions whatever.

On the 3rd of February I went on shore, to visit King Glass and to view his town. On landing I bent my steps towards the place, followed by Tom Qua Ben. The villages on the Gaboon are built, like those at Loango, a little way inland; but, as they generally stand on a rising ground, they are conspicuous enough, more especially from the peculiar manner in which they are arranged, so as to form a broad street leading up at a right angle from the line of the shore, giving the whole at a distant view a remarkable appearance, resembling, from the regularity, a broad flight of steps. King Glass's town was built in this way. I entered it, passing under an arch formed by two large branches of a tree planted in the ground, and bent so as to meet at the top. On my right, nearly in the middle of the broad street, was a very low and small hut, which Tom Qua Ben informed me was a fetiche-house, and under which were the remains of the old King Glass. It was hung inside with a profusion of consecrated articles, such as clothes, Neptune's pots (large

brass pans), plates, knives, cups, looking-glasses, &c.

From this account I imagined it to be a mausoleum, and the articles in it so many offerings to the memory of the deceased occupant. I therefore inquired why it was termed a fetiche-house. "Why?" answered Tom; "because e lib dere."—"What sort of a being is he?" I rejoined. "Being! being! e no being—e Toby Fillpot." My gravity was overcome, and forgetting at the time the earthenware representation of that character so commonly to be seen on the mantel-pieces of the cottagers in England, I asked whom he meant by Toby Fillpot. "Toby Fillpot! Toby Fillpot!" exclaimed Tom in astonishment, "you no sabby him! Got big mouth, big eyes, and belly all de same as cappen of frigate me tell you of." This officer so strangely alluded to had appeared off the river some years back, and by his portly dimensions had astonished the natives.

Their superstitions respecting the fetiche are extraordinary enough. Once a month, at full moon, the king enters his abode to ask advice on important affairs, and comes out again fully impressed with the idea that he has gained the

information which he sought. If a crime is committed, the fetiche is invoked, in what manner I know not, to discover who the delinquent is. The threat, however, of resorting to this expedient is generally sufficient, especially if the offence is not of the most heinous kind. The superstitious fear of the perpetrator leads him to confess and receive the mitigated punishment, rather than, by denying the fact, incur the greater displeasure of the wooden deity, whom he considers as the arbiter of his destiny. By these means a cartridge-box and a knife belonging to one of the seamen, which had been pilfered by the natives, were quickly recovered. King Glass took a very active part in the affair, impelled in a great measure by the fear he entertained of the brig, which, besides being a war-ship, he well knew to have been purposely sent out to examine the place, and to report on it. He dreaded an unfavourable account through such an official channel, and was therefore on his good behaviour.

Fetiches are not generally worn among these people. Those who have them keep them concealed, and consider them no otherwise efficacious than as preventives of the effects of

poison, of which they stand in great dread. I should suppose that poisoning is the most common means of revenge employed: certain it is that they are very apt to ascribe to it the death of any one for whom they have a particular regard, especially if the deceased should perish while under the protection of another, or even in his territory, for it is accounted the same thing.

The Prince of Parrot Island espoused a daughter of King Glass's. She soon afterwards died. The fetiche was invoked, and the chief condemned, unheard, as the poisoner of his wife. King Glass demanded from him a very heavy penalty, which he, conscious of his innocence, refused to pay. He instantly became a proscribed character in the view of the king and his people, and his doom was to be death wherever he was caught. One day he repaired on board an English merchant-brig, with an assortment of ivory to dispose of. King Glass and his people received intelligence of the circumstance, and in a few minutes upwards of fifty boats and canoes surrounded the brig, with the intention to seize him the moment he should quit her. This the master of the vessel,

considering the man as under his protection, strongly remonstrated against; but his arguments would have availed nothing, had they not at last been accompanied by a threat and preparations for firing on the boats, as likewise by the expression of a determination, not only to leave the river immediately, and to trade no more with so savage a race, but also to warn all English vessels of the circumstance, that they might equally avoid the place. The boats dispersed, and the prince was permitted to return unmolested to his island, whence he shortly afterwards despatched heralds of peace to the parent of his deceased wife, and the affair, which had so nearly cost him his life, was finally adjusted in an amicable manner.

The Gaboon has been but little resorted to by men-of-war: the earliest that Case Glass could remember was a large frigate, the captain of which had his wife on board. She was the only English lady he ever beheld. He described her as being very handsome, and dwelt in raptures on the symmetrical form of her neck, which he said was "very, very long, and bending like his arm." Yet, though he admired her appearance, he by no means

approved her manners, saying that she told a "d——n lie," by holding her nose when the black men approached, and exclaiming that the smell of them was offensive.

After passing the fetiche-house, Tom Qua Ben accompanied me to the residence of King Glass. The street was about one hundred feet in breadth, and the huts forming it, in a well-defined line, were by no means of superior workmanship; yet a great improvement in that respect was evident in those of later construction. Their gable-ends, which always fronted the street, were generally in great part open; thus leaving a cool and pleasant retreat from the heat of the sun, without being shut up from the light, or exposed to the disagreeable effects of the smoke from the fire, as is the case in the generality of the abodes of savages. This open part occupied one half of the interior; the other was partitioned off into sleeping-rooms, store-rooms, and in two or three instances a cook-room besides: however, that practice was rapidly on the decline, the natives beginning to feel aware how dirty and uncomfortable it was. The fire was accordingly kindled either in the front of the open

space, or under a shed erected for the purpose.

The huts varied in size, some exceeding forty feet in length and eighteen in breadth. They were constructed of the leaves of the palm, tolerably neatly interwoven, and were often lined inside by broad stripes of the bark of the surrounding trees. The central partition was generally composed of this material, and hung with leather fans and other small articles likely to be in request. The floor was raised a foot or more above the level of the surrounding ground, and composed of hard clay well beaten down. The doors were generally carved with a variety of figures, often of the most grotesque character. The furniture consisted of a table and benches, or forms, to sit on, as also stools, resembling those of Cape Lopez, and often chairs, either of English manufacture, or neat and correct imitations of them.

I passed on to the king's dwelling, which differed from the rest only in being a little larger. I found him seated in an old-fashioned arm-chair, with a long table before him, spread over with a green cloth. He rose on my ar-

rival, as did also his numerous native visiters, and in very fair English welcomed me to his house. I explained to him, in Capt. Vidal's name, the object of the Barracouta's coming; on which point, however, he was previously well informed. He was apparently about fifty-five years old, of tall stature and pleasing expression of countenance; his manners were plain, and his dress differed not from those around him. The furniture of his house was also the same as that already described, with the exception of two large ship-bells, used to give an alarm, or merrily ring in a day of rejoicing. One of these bore the date of 1787, and an inscription, stating that it was presented as a token of regard by the house of Sydenham and Co. merchants, of Bristol, to the old King Glass.

I shortened my visit, and, after having rambled some time about the town, returned to the shore, where I met Capt. Vidal just landing, much to the gratification of the natives, who always considered the good faith of a vessel towards them guaranteed by the captain's appearing and trusting himself among them. Tom Qua Ben emphatically explained

the general feeling that prevailed in these cases, by exclaiming: "When dat ting come, King Glass give all his gentlemen" (a term applied to those above the lowest order) "plainty rum, and woman laugh too much."

In our case, as we came not to trade, the donation was probably dispensed with, and the laughter also, on account of the general dread of men-of-war that exists on the coast, as already stated, more especially at the Gaboon, where they are little known and less understood. The trade in the river principally consists in slaves and ivory; that in the former being carried on upon a grand scale with the French, Spaniards and Portuguese, and in the latter with the English. Redwood was also in great demand during the late war, and was mostly used for the purpose of dyeing army clothing; but since the peace this trade has almost ceased, so that at present the article is often purchased for firewood. The natives, like all savages, are difficult to drive a bargain with, postponing the conclusion of it till your patience is nearly exhausted, in the hope of gaining some trifle more; which often, as soon as obtained, only encourages them to extend

their demands still farther. Even when it is struck, and the goods exchanged, they will pester you to dash (a slang term for 'to give') them something as an act of friendship. Should the article which they have disposed of be valuable,—such as a wife, a slave, or a large tusk,—they will accept assorted goods only in return. Thus, one day, when I was on board an English merchant-brig, two tusks were brought off by a native, one weighing eighty-two pounds, and the other forty-eight; and for these the following were the principal articles given in exchange:—Four muskets (Birmingham), two Neptunes, two iron kettles, four pieces of cloth, some nails, assorted fish-hooks, earthenware beads, copper-bars, one jar of rum. A view of this list would astonish the ivory-merchants on the East coast, where the article is so much cheaper.

An ingenious contrivance to aid the memory was observed by one of our officers, while employed in a boat surveying the shore in the vicinity of King Qua Ben's town. That monarch, knowing that we wished to obtain some bullocks, despatched one of his chiefs, as the boat was passing, to make proposals to supply

us ; but as he probably heard that we had but a poor assortment of articles to give in return, he thought it best, to prevent the necessity of the canoes going backward and forward, to state at once four different assortments of goods as the price of his bullocks, so that we might give whichever we chose. For this purpose, a piece of wood, having four sides, was brought off by the chief, who, by certain notches on each angle, was enabled to deliver the list correctly, which otherwise he would in all probability have forgotten by the way.

Of the various objects of novelty and interest in the Gaboon, that which created the greatest surprise in us on our arrival was the wonderful ingenuity displayed by the natives in the construction of their canoes, or rather boats : for, although hewn out as the former, they were shaped like the latter. Some were upwards of thirty feet in length, and of proportionate breadth, though hollowed out of a single tree, which, for size, compactness of the grain, and yet small specific gravity, was really extraordinary.

The largest of these trees on the immediate banks of the river have long since disappeared ;

but at a very short distance inland there are extensive forests of them. When one is wanted, it is cut or burned down, and, to reduce its weight, squared on the spot to within a little of the dimensions of the intended boat. It is then turned over on some small spars, and by means of them carried on the shoulders of frequently more than a hundred of the natives to the water's edge. It is placed under a shed, and there, sheltered from the sun, soon metamorphosed into a boat, which combines symmetry of form, strength, and solidity, with safety and swiftness, either in pulling or sailing.

I shall close this chapter, and also the subject of the Gaboon, by stating that the river is in every respect well adapted for trade — mild weather prevails outside — no dangerous bar exists at its mouth — and, with a breadth of four and five miles, it runs up even past those places where trade may be obtained, carrying a depth of four fathoms and more over the bar, and a still greater inside. Beyond, it opens out into an extensive basin, unexamined by us, yet from which we could observe several rivers branching off in various directions. The country is no doubt unhealthy; for although in some

parts it rises into hills of a tolerable height, yet generally low lands intervene between them and the river; a feature which, when bordering on a river in a hot climate, sufficiently indicates the unhealthiness of the spot.

CHAPTER XII.

Arrival in Corisco Bay.—Jack Romando.—Massacre of the Crew of the Brig Chub of Liverpool.—Degraded State of the Women. — Price of a good Wife. — Extraordinary Customs.—Broken English of the Natives.—The Author's Honesty questioned. — Cheapness of Provisions. — Interview with the Bulla People. — Departure from Corisco. — Diminutive Canoes. — Arrival at the Cameroons. — Harmattan Haze.—A Marine drowned.—The Vessel anchors off the Bimbia. — Three instances of Treachery there. — Ill-mannered Chief.—Loss of an Anchor.

On the morning of the 14th of February 1826, we left the river Gaboon for Corisco Bay, where we soon arrived, the distance being only eight miles. The island bearing that name, signifying in Portuguese 'a thunderbolt,' which it obtained from the prevalence of thunder-storms there when it was first discovered, is situated in latitude 54′ 30″ north, and longitude 9° 16′ east, half-way across in front of the bay, which is thirty-two miles broad and four-

teen deep, and serves to disembogue the waters of two rivers, the Moonjee Angra, or Danger, to the northward, and Moondah* in the opposite direction. Having heard in every place that we visited a very unfavourable account of the people of Corisco Island, we expected to have had little if any intercourse with them; but we were mistaken. Jack Romando, a kinsman of their King Jun, and who in his early years visited England, soon made his appearance on board, and produced several certificates highly commending his honesty as a tradesman and his humanity to strangers. Two of these, recording the latter quality, were particularly honourable. One was from Captain Kelly, of his Majesty's ship Pheasant, stating that the bearer and two or more chiefs by force obliged the natives in the vicinity of Cape St. John to set at liberty the crew of an English vessel which had been wrecked there, whom they had detained as captives. Romando took them with him to Corisco, and there treated them with the utmost hospitality and kindness, until an opportunity arrived for their leaving the

* Moonjee and Moondah are Native names, and Angra Portuguese, signifying 'a bay.'

island in an English vessel. The other certificate was from two boys, the only survivors of the crew of the brig Chub, of Liverpool. She was at anchor off Corisco, in company with a Portuguese schooner belonging to Prince's Island, with which she was apparently on the most friendly terms, insomuch that the crews were in the habit of mixing together, and the masters of dining with each other. Even to the moment of the indiscriminate massacre of the Chub's people, this semblance of harmony prevailed. Mr. Matthews, the unfortunate master of the Chub, was at the time actually dining with Joze Ribeiro Francisco Gustaõ, who commanded the schooner, and was probably the first who fell. The two boys were also absent, and they were deterred from returning on board by hearing, as they approached, the expiring cries of their murdered comrades. Jack Romando, who had acted as tradesman, was in the Chub's cabin when the massacre commenced on deck. With his wife and child, and a black man belonging to Mayamba, he immediately jumped overboard through the stern windows; yet not so expeditiously but that the latter, before he could effect his escape, was severely

stabbed in the side, and received a blow which almost broke his arm. The boys picked them up and escaped to the island, where, next morning, the brig was perceived on shore; the villains who murdered the crew having afterwards got drunk, and in all probability purposely occasioned her destruction. We could not obtain any other particulars of this affair, excepting that Jack Romando asserted that it was occasioned by Mr. Matthews having indiscreetly boasted of the quantity of gold-dust which he had on board, in the presence of the master of the schooner, who to us certainly appeared to be the chief actor in the tragedy. He still resides at Prince's Island, and has, according to what we afterwards learned, visited England expressly for the purpose of exculpating himself. The certificate ended by a grateful acknowledgment of the many acts of kindness and attention which the writers had received from Jack Romando while sojourning on the island.

After reading these certificates, we felt surprised that the character of cut-throats should have been attached to the people of Corisco. In all probability it may have originated in an

individual act of treachery, and the natives of other places along the coast found it to their interest to circulate the report, and to magnify its tendency, with a view to engross to themselves the trade which Corisco formerly enjoyed. Of this conduct the people of the Gaboon are certainly guilty; for they are on such friendly terms with those of Corisco, and in the habit of daily communication with them, that they must well know how much, to say the least of it, they misrepresent the character of the latter. Both resemble each other in dress and manners, yet, strange to say, they speak different languages. The women of Corisco are also kept in precisely the same degraded state as those on the Gaboon; and I am inclined to believe that, in savage life, where might constitutes right so much more than it does in civilized countries, the weaker vessel always goes to the wall, and forms, as it were, a link between freedom and slavery.

At Corisco, a female is purchased for a wife from her parents; and if her husband, after taking her to his house, finds, even after keeping her some days, that she falls short of his expectations, as to her ability to perform

the various domestic duties allotted to her, he returns her forthwith to her parents, demanding at the same time restitution of the goods which he paid. If this is refused, he immediately sells her for a slave, to reimburse himself in part for his loss: for the value of a free woman, as a wife, is far greater than that of a female slave; and the difference consequently constitutes the loss. She is held to be worth a large elephant's tusk more valuable than a prime man slave; and, if possessed of superior acquirements as a good housewife and so forth, is deemed equivalent to the following goods, which Jack Romando assured me he paid for his best wife:—

2 Neptunes	1 fine hat	4 mugs
1 kettle	1 cap	4 dishes
1 brass pan	2 silk handkerchiefs	5 pieces of cloth
11 iron bars	6 knives	1 Jebbo ditto
2 muskets	4 plates	1 coat
2 cutlasses	4 glasses	3 jars of rum.

When a wife of the above value, and for whom the husband might have had a particular affection, dies, she is placed in a coffin, and over her grave is erected a small hut, as in the case of old King Glass; and, like his, it is hung

with such articles as can be afforded: but the remains of an ordinary wife are cast into a pit, carelessly dug for the purpose, without either ornaments or accompanying ceremony.

If a wife, while visiting her father, or being accidentally in his territory, meets with a violent death, he is expected to refund to the husband the amount which he paid for her; and the same line is pursued by the father, if his daughter meets the like fate in her husband's territory. An instance of the latter I have already related in the case of the Prince of Parrot Island; and Jack Romando furnished me in his own person with one of the former. He married the daughter of a chief residing at Cape St. John. Some time afterwards the girl, by his permission, crossed over to visit her father, and while tarrying there was killed by a tiger, great numbers of which infest the neighbouring lands. Romando immediately demanded the usual forfeit, which was refused, and the result was to be a fight, or an attempt to kidnap some one or other of his father-in-law's dependents, for the purpose of being sold at the slave-market, in order to reimburse Romando for the loss which he had sustained.

The latter method appeared to suit him best, for the day before we sailed he informed me, under a strict promise of secrecy, that he had concerted a plan to obtain redress in a manner which he had no doubt would be crowned with success.

Along the West coast of Africa the natives who speak English are in the habit of interspersing it with a variety of slang terms, and words often so strangely misapplied as to afford much amusement to those who hear them so used for the first time. It would require more space than I can spare to enumerate them all: but among the most remarkable are, "bob," meaning noise or threats; as, for example, "Suppose I teef dat man wife, bob come my side." "To live," is used for "to stop," or to express position; as, "Ship live here two moons," "rock live here;"—and "chop" for eating; as, "Suppose go long way among Bullaman, he chops you."

As they know little about men-of-war, they have no idea of the denomination of the respective classes of officers in them; and thus it is that they equally term mates all who are inferior in rank to the captain, although the

number puzzled them exceedingly. When the brig sailed round from the Gaboon to Corisco, I preceded her in the pinnace, at three or four miles' distance, in order by keeping close in shore to obtain its features more correctly. In passing a large village, four canoes, laden with plantains, paddled out after me with such swiftness, that, although we were running at the time before a moderate breeze, they quickly came up; but, before they would venture alongside, loudly hailed me, in tolerably good English, with, "I say, you mate, you mate, you no big rogue? ship no big rogue?" A favourable answer as to character being returned, these simple people, who appeared not to consider how cheap words were when uttered to aid a bad intent, approached with the utmost confidence and trafficked with us. Cloth was the article on which they set the greatest value, and next to that tobacco, the smallest quantity of the latter being deemed equivalent to a large bunch of plantains, and, when a brass bangle was added, it would purchase a goat. Even at Corisco tobacco was scarcely in less request: a fact extraordinary in itself, inasmuch as, at a place so near as the Gaboon, it is comparatively

speaking, of little or no value. Indeed, we found supplies in general far cheaper at the island than in the river, probably fifty per cent.

Two towns on Cape St. John, which forms the northern limit of the bay, are under the sovereignty of the King of Corisco; but elsewhere they are peopled by Bullamen, with some of whom I had an opportunity of communicating on the north point of the river Moonyee. They were in a very wild and savage state, and so timid, that, although I was surrounded by upwards of one hundred, including women and children, yet a slight motion that I accidentally made with a spy-glass, which they mistook for a musket, put the whole to flight, excepting one young man, who, possessing more spirit than the rest, stood his ground, and, by applying his eye to the glass, ascertained its harmless nature. On this discovery, a loud halloo from him brought back in great glee those who had fled, and who, after looking in turn through the late object of their dread, danced about me in the wildest manner imaginable. Cloth was the article in most request, and so scarce, that the older people alone could afford to wear it; and a very small quantity sufficed

for the purchase of a goat. Tobacco was held in little less estimation: the smallest portion was considered as a very handsome gift; and in return for the little I distributed among them, but which was all I had, they, perceiving that we wanted firewood, quickly procured for me, out of gratitude, more than was amply sufficient. The boys had no clothing whatever, and the younger portion of the women by no means sufficient for the primary purpose of decency. One of these, of elegant figure, and the prettiest among the crowd, her father or husband led forth, and the price of her charms was a leaf of tobacco.

The natives, well knowing the antipathy of the English to the slave-trade, and their activity in suppressing it, are fearful of making it too much the subject of conversation. However, Jack Romando, one evening, when a little elevated by the spirits he had drunk, enumerated to us the quantities of the various goods paid for a slave. The amount was immediately committed to paper: when the chief perceived the purport of the memorandum, he was excessively indignant, expressing his full persuasion that some blow would in consequence be level-

led against the trade, and he, as the involuntary cause, be branded as a blab.

It took us fourteen days to complete the survey of the bay, hitherto in a hydrographical sense so little known. The two rivers we were obliged to leave unexplored, although they were well worthy of examination, especially the Moonyee, in the mouth of which the water had scooped out a channel thirty-two fathoms in depth. We left Corisco on the 18th of February, and on the 24th anchored off the river Cameroons.

The intermediate coast was low, apparently not swampy, covered with trees, and bordered at the water's edge by a narrow sandy strand. It appeared to be thickly inhabited, and from the numerous villages which skirted its extent whole parties of canoes shoved off and waylaid us as we passed. They were of very diminutive size, for which peculiarity it would be difficult to account, otherwise than that the landing was bad, and that therefore it was necessary, as the canoes approached the breakers, that they should be shouldered and carried through them to the shore.

One day we had twenty-five of these around

us, yet not one would venture alongside; neither indeed could they, had they been so inclined, without incurring almost the certainty of being overturned. They were of the slightest construction, scarcely eight feet long, and never contained more than one man, who, generally having his legs over the side, contributed as much with them to impel the canoe as he did by the small paddle which he used. The side was not more than half a foot above the surface of the water, consequently the slightest ripple was sufficient to render them unsafe; yet such was the dexterity of the navigators, that, from time to time, as the water entered, they kicked it out as if they were baling —a fact which, to those who have not witnessed it, would appear almost incredible. We were going at the rate of four miles an hour, yet these canoes kept up with us, and that apparently with ease. They brought off for the purpose of traffic nothing but fish, for which, though they appeared so anxious to obtain cloth in exchange, they demanded a greater return in that article than was at all consistent, and which, till just before they left, they persevered in requiring. The exchange was made through the

medium of the boat astern, for they were too fearful to come near enough to the vessel herself.

As we approached the river Cameroons, we became enveloped in the haze of the harmattan, although the wind peculiar to it did not prevail where we were during the whole time of its continuance, a period of sixteen days. This exemption was probably owing to the vicinity of the lofty mountains of the Cameroons, and the highest on Fernando Po: for, before the harmattan ceased, we visited that island, and still carried with us the same extraordinary winds; while, on the contrary, at the river Bonny, the harmattan was at the same time accompanied by its usual breeze from the eastward. With us the winds were extremely variable. At first they blew from the southward and eastward in the morning, but during the last four or five days inclined to the westward; in the afternoon, they always veered round to the southward and westward, excepting in one or two solitary instances.

The characteristics of the harmattan are, the unchangeable direction of the wind, its parch-

ing dryness, the density of its fog or haze,* and the periodical return of its visits, from the month of October till the latter end of February or beginning of March. With us the degree of its density varied much: at times we could distinguish objects five miles off, and at others not even at the distance of one; the barometer and thermometer averaged 30° 12′ and 85° 44′, the same as they had done before; no particular dryness of the atmosphere was felt during the day, neither did the dew cease at night. Everything considered, it appears to me that we were just on the limits of the range of the harmattan; but, having only once witnessed its effects, and that under peculiar circumstances, my remarks may not apply to other instances of that phenomenon.

Our small stock of provisions was rapidly decreasing; it therefore became necessary to obtain more, that we might be enabled to complete the extent of the survey assigned to us. Accordingly, as soon as we anchored, a boat was despatched up the river, to procure what

* The deviation from this that we experienced I cannot but consider as local, and therefore pass it unnoticed in a general view of the characteristics of the harmattan.

she could from any English merchant-vessel that might be found there. A brig was the only one, and she had none to spare. In returning in the boat, while passing a dry sandbank situated on an extensive flat, she grounded and remained fast. The ebb-tide running out at the time, it was in vain to attempt to move her, and nothing could be done but to ascertain where the deepest water lay, so that on the return of the flood she might proceed in that direction, and thus lose as little time as possible in reaching the brig. For this purpose three of the crew were despatched. They waded towards the dry sandbank, and had approached within a few fathoms of it, when suddenly the two foremost lost their footing, and slipped into a deep channel, through which the tide was running like a sluice. Neither could swim: one fortunately succeeded in regaining his footing, but the other, an elderly marine named Hobday, was swept away, and in a few minutes sunk. A seaman, who rushed in to save him, narrowly escaped the same fate. This accident was the first of the kind which had befallen any one belonging to the Barracouta for upwards of four years—an extraordinary fact, when it is

considered how often they had been exposed to such fatalities in the boats.

Our survey of the entrance of the Cameroons was necessarily much retarded by the nature of the weather that prevailed; and it was not until the 2nd of March that we finally completed it, and even then the examination was by no means so critical as the subject deserved.

The river Cameroons appears, in the approach, to be far more considerable than it really is; for although, at the entrance, it exhibits an open space seven miles across, yet that is but the mouth, common alike to the Malembe river, which at a short distance up branches off to the north-east, and to the Cameroons, which runs to the northward and eastward. The best channel for entering lies on the western shore, along which are several extensive creeks: one of these communicates with the small river Bimbia, and forms an island of the intervening space, a distance of nine miles. Suelaba, or the eastern point of the Cameroons, is situated in latitude 3° 49′ 17″ north, and longitude 9° 31′ 15″ east: it is low, as well as all the land immediately bordering on the river, and, from its marshy nature, must necessarily be highly prejudicial to health.

After leaving the Cameroons, we proceeded round the Bimbia, where we were visited by two canoes, one of which was of the largest dimensions. She was capable of holding upwards of fifty people, but carried no more than thirty-three, who afforded a curious sight, by the rapidity with which they plied their paddles, and the exact time which they kept with them; resembling rather a piece of mechanism than the united efforts of men. These canoes should never be allowed to approach a merchant-vessel weakly manned, as two instances of successful treachery are on record against them: one in which they plundered and destroyed an English sloop, together with her crew; and another, where they contented themselves with merely taking what they wanted, and ill-treating the men.

A few years ago they likewise attempted to cut out an English brig; but the master, Mr. Town, being aware of their intention, quickly obliged them to retreat, with the loss of four killed.

The chiefs, or, as they term themselves, "gentlemen for the king," who visited us in their canoes, were distinguishable at a consi-

derable distance, by the elevated chair on which they sat, and the umbrella borne over their heads. They had supposed us to be a merchant-vessel, and were much chagrined when they found out their mistake; for, as a man-of-war brings no trade, but, on the contrary, tends to curb it, by suppressing the illicit commerce in slaves, whence they derive their greatest profits, so she excites no other feeling than fear, and a hearty desire to get rid of her as quickly as possible.

Impressed with the idea that the Barracouta was a merchantman, the second chief who came on board, on hearing Captain Vidal say that we had just quitted the Cameroons, contradicted him in very gross terms, such as he had learned in his intercourse with the seamen. The expression, it was evident, proceeded from his knowing no better, and consequently only served to furnish amusement. It appeared that, through the agency of some one of the Cameroons, he was in the habit of supplying merchant-vessels arriving there with slaves and ivory; and consequently felt assured that we, whom he considered as belonging to that class, could not have been in the river without his

knowledge. The moment he discovered what we were, he made the *amende honorable*, by turning to Captain Vidal, and exclaiming, "Ah! me sabbee now, cappen, you speakee true—no telle e d—n lie;" and then, with the easy composure of one who was not aware of having expressed himself strongly, he joined in the conversation that was going on.

Our failure to obtain provisions at the Cameroons, together with the continuation of the harmattan haze, and the unfavourable tendency of the coast to the westward, that would render adverse a prevalent wind which was before fair, determined Captain Vidal to quit the coast of the main, to call at the neighbouring island of Fernando Po for such refreshments as he could procure, and thence to proceed to the river Bonny, where there would be the best chance of obtaining provisions, on account of the number of English vessels which resort thither. If we were successful at that place, we should have a fair wind for surveying the coast back to the place where we left off; and if not, we should at least have gained a little in our advance towards Sierra Leone.

Pursuant to the above arrangement, we re-

linquished the survey on the 6th of March, and next morning commenced weighing, for the purpose of proceeding to Fernando Po, when the Cairo cable, by which we were riding, and which had been used instead of the chain, on account of the great depth of water, (twenty-five fathoms,) parted. By this accident we lost an anchor, and, with all the efforts we made, we could not regain it, though we sacrificed a day and a half in the attempt. As, during this time, Fernando Po with its heights, and the stupendous mountains of the main, were enveloped in the haze, I shall defer my description of them until our return, when from the prevalence of clear weather we had ample opportunity for examining them, and merely introduce here a few observations relative to the history of the above-mentioned island.

Fernando Po appears to have remained uncolonized many years after its discovery by the Portuguese, differing in that respect from the neighbouring Islands of St. Thomas, Annobona, and Prince's Island, which had settlements established on them at a very early date. At what period Fernando Po was eventually subjected, I know not. Mr. Purdy, in his

memoir, states that the Portuguese once had a fort there, on the east end, which they abandoned; but, in another publication which I have seen, it is stated that they were driven out by the Spaniards, who, however, did not long retain the island, owing to the appalling acts of cruelty which they committed on the natives, who, habitually of a savage and revengeful disposition, retaliated by the indiscriminate slaughter of their oppressors.

CHAPTER XIII.

Arrival at Fernando Po.—Description of the Island, and of the Manners and Customs of the Natives.—Arrival at the River Bonny.—Palm-oil Trade.—King Peppel.—War Canoes.—Fight between Slavers and the Boats of the British Squadron.—Peppel affronted.—Bonny Town.—Jewjews.—Superstitious Forms adopted by Peppel when visiting the Shipping.—Sacrifice of a Boy on the Bar.—Promotion of Captain Vidal and Lieutenant Mudge.—Arrival at the River Formoso.

AMONG the charts with which we were supplied, was a sketch of the bay at Fernando Po usually resorted to by shipping: this bay we did not immediately hit upon, by reason of the haze, but entered another, called the East or Maidstone Bay, which we were eventually induced to consider as the better of the two.

We anchored there in the afternoon, and soon afterwards despatched Mr. Rogier to the shore, to a spot where we observed some natives assembled, in order to effect a friendly under-

standing with them, and to ascertain if there was any watering-place, and if so, where. A bottle of rum and a few trinkets were taken as presents; yet, though they were held up to view as the boat approached, nearly half an hour elapsed before a meeting could be brought about with the natives, who, having suffered from the kidnapping treachery of contraband slavers, were extremely timid, suspicious, and distrustful. The bottle they accepted with eagerness, made wry faces at its contents—so much prized on the coast of the main that no bargain can be concluded without it—and handled the trinkets as articles which, not being essentially useful, were unworthy of notice. However, they appeared to be conciliated by the tender of friendship, and, in earnest of their good-will, pointed out the stream of fresh water.

Next morning our boats, well armed, repaired to the spot, two being engaged in taking in water, while a third kept off on her oars, ready to render assistance in case of emergency. In the course of the day I visited them. They were surrounded by at least four hundred of the natives, laden with yams, which they bar-

tered for pieces of iron hoop, which they preferred to razors, knives, or any other cutlery. Our intercourse with savages of various tribes and nations for the last four years had far exceeded that which generally falls to the lot of navigators or travellers overland; yet never did we meet with a people more savage in their appearance, or more singular in their costume, than the inhabitants of Fernando Po. In stature they were generally low, yet of perfectly symmetrical form, and in most cases of truly herculean mould. In hue they varied much, some being jet black, and others of a copper colour; yet, as their features were of precisely the same cast, I cannot imagine that the latter had sprung from intercourse with the Whites. In general their faces were of large proportions; yet their features were pregnant with intelligence and a quick feeling, that could not submit to be tampered with. In illustration of the latter, I need but mention, that, during our second visit to the bay, when their confidence in us overcame their fears, they crowded on board in such numbers, that it became necessary to limit them to a particular range, bounded by ropes drawn across. This they often

broke through, and were as often pushed back: this act, as it bordered on a blow, gave them an opportunity of manifesting, by the haughty indignation which they displayed, how much their feelings were hurt by such a procedure.

The principal article of their costume was grotesque in the extreme: it was a straw hat, with a narrow brim and low crown, the top of which they were not sufficiently skilful to form otherwise than by puckering the upper parts of the sides together. In the ornaments of these hats, a singular taste prevailed: they consisted of monkeys' skulls, dogs' jaws, small bones placed across, the horns of goats or deer, with a portion of the frontal bone attached; the whole being in some cases shrouded over and half hidden from the view by a funereal plume of jet-black feathers, producing a most sombre and dismal effect. Wooden pellets, incrusted with earth of different hues, together with an assorted collection of shells and other articles, were also in general added. The whole was attached to their heads by means of bone skewers, passed through their superabundant stock of hair, which, begrimed with unsavoury grease and red earth, was plaited up into tails,

and allowed to hang down on each side of the face and behind, resembling a large bunch of cigars: these, by protruding, gave to the head a magnified appearance, which the general disproportionate size of their hats tended to increase. The ornaments also about their bodies were equally extraordinary: on one arm they generally had a very broad bracelet, formed of small pieces of shells strung together like beads, and on the wrists narrower ones of the same kind.

A knife, constructed from our iron hoop, was secured in a case to their left arm, a little below the shoulder. Round their waists they had either a serpent's backbone, strung through with a piece of line formed from the fibres of the palm-tree, or threads of shell, or earthenware beads, of which latter they appeared to have a great quantity, apparently of Portuguese and English manufacture.

For the purposes of decency, some few had a small piece of cloth or a branch of palm-fibres in front; but by far the greatest number had nothing more than a leaf, especially the young women, who had their heads shaved, and were not permitted, like the matrons and the men,

to incrust themselves with a muddy layer of the unsavoury red earth. Besides the snakes' backbones around their waists, most of the men had similar ornaments round their necks, together with dogs' jawbones, wooden bells, shells, and various other trinkets. Some had also a small calabash, of lengthened form, open at both ends, by blowing through which they contrived with great exertion to make a noise that was anything but pleasing: yet, rude as it was, they appeared to possess nothing else which at all partook of the character of a musical instrument, not even a drum.

Their arms consisted of spears, formed of long slender sticks, pointed at the end, jagged and hardened by fire, and slings, in the management of which they displayed tolerable dexterity; but these were not generally carried by them, yet there were few without them who had not a long staff, of a very heavy kind of wood, as a substitute.

The chiefs were easily recognised by the greater profusion of ornaments with which they were decked out, more especially the broad bracelets of earthenware, or shell-beads,

which were worn by some on the arms and wrists, as well as above and below each knee. These were accompanied by a broad belt of the same round the middle, and a narrow one passing over the shoulder and descending across the breast, which gave to the wearer a very imposing appearance, and in some instances reminded me of the banditti costume of the theatres.

The canoes were of long slender shape, with rounded sterns and sharp prominent prows; they were neatly cased outside, apparently in imitation of basket-work, and on the bow carried a slender reed, resembling the *Arundo donax*, about twelve feet in length, surmounted at the top by a bunch, composed apparently of the stripes of the husk of Indian corn, which, by its weight, caused a small portion of the extremity of the reed to droop, and the whole to wave gracefully backward and forward with the motion of the canoe or the action of the passing breeze. The sails were formed of narrow slips of reed, and had a yard above and below; the latter, when under sail, was always held up by a man, ready to let go

the instant it became necessary. Each had also a bundle of spears in it, with the pointed ends projecting over the prow.

In no place that we visited did the natives appear to be in a state of such barbarism as at Fernando Po; indeed, a stranger would imagine from their manners that they had never seen a white man before: yet this is not the case, as they are often visited by men-of-war from the Sierra Leone station, and sometimes by merchant-vessels.

The officers and seamen employed in procuring water on shore had to undergo a most disgusting ordeal: both men and women subjected them, whenever they could do so by stealth, to an examination of their clothes and persons, which was highly offensive to decency; yet they manifested withal a decided abhorrence of theft, which would even have done credit to a people far more advanced in civilization. The predatory acts which individuals in two or three instances perpetrated against us, excited the utmost indignation amongst the community of the natives: they immediately despatched an armed party in pursuit of the delinquent, who in not one case that occurred was

permitted to escape. He was brought back in triumph, the stolen articles returned, and signs made that the offender should atone for his crime by the loss of his hands; which they evidently are in the habit of cutting off for some offence or other, as several of those who visited us were in that mutilated state. Theft, I was given to understand by one of the natives, was the crime for which three of these men had suffered, who, while I was inquiring the reason, happened to be present, and consequently served me as examples. Hence I should conclude that this offence had formerly been allowed to pass unpunished, till it became so great a public nuisance as to require the severest measures to check it, and these were assented to by the community for the protection of property.

We knew that Fernando Po abounded in yams, and were in hopes of obtaining other refreshments, but were disappointed, as the natives seemed determined to bring nothing else; yet even these proved a most seasonable supply, for our bread was reduced to such a filthy state by the cockroaches as to be truly disgusting, and any substitute was preferable to it. The

yams are indigenous, grow wild in the woods, and are as celebrated for their size as they are esteemed for their quality. In fact, such was their mealy nature and superior flavour, that they approached far nearer to a potatoe in taste than they did to the generality of their own kind, as produced in other countries. Even those on the main were greatly inferior, being of smaller size and often fibrous. Twelve of those of Fernando Po, taken promiscuously from the rest, weighed fifty-six pounds, which I considered rather below the general average. The bundles which the natives brought for sale consisted of seven or eight, and were sold separately for a piece of iron hoop about two inches and a half long, and sometimes, especially when the boats were on the point of going, twice the quantity could be procured for the same price.

All traffic took place in the pinnace; the natives wading out to her as she lay at her grapnel, laying down their yams, and joyfully returning with whatever they procured in exchange. The scene altogether was very lively and novel, on account of the extraordinary appearance of the people in the water, holding

their yams above their heads, and all pressing forward to dispose of them. By the time we had completed watering, a tolerably good understanding was established with these people; yet they had not so far overcome their timidity as to venture on board. A present, consisting of some pieces of iron hoop, was distributed among the chiefs who had been most active in promoting and keeping up a good understanding with us, by repressing on the part of their people anything which might tend to disturb it; after which, on the evening of the 10th of March, we sailed for the Bonny, where we arrived on the 15th, having been delayed by the prevalence of light westerly airs, although we did not, as we were led to expect, find a current against us.

It was late when we anchored off the river; therefore no boats were despatched excepting the pinnace, which left us a little before we came to, for the purpose of ascertaining what vessels were in the river, and whether we could obtain provisions from them. She found seven under English colours, six of which belonged to Mr. Tobin of Liverpool, and one to his brother, Sir John; as also several small schooners en-

gaged in the slave-trade, belonging to French and Spaniards. A muster of provisions was immediately made, which they, as well as the king, named Peppel, were all glad to supply, in order to get rid of us, for such is the dread there of a man-of-war, that the presence of one, even off the river, occasioned an instant stagnation of the trade within. That carried on by the English consists in palm-oil. It is supplied by the natives in large calabashes, brought down the river by canoes from the distance of many days' journey in the interior—some so far, and by such various modes of carriage, that not even the name of the country whence it comes is known, and still less its situation. To convey an idea of the mercantile emulation which prevails in the interior, it will suffice to state, that eleven years ago one vessel could scarcely obtain a cargo of palm-oil at the Bonny; whereas now eight or ten annually load with it. The slave-trade once abolished with a strong hand, how quickly would this part of Africa improve! The rich productions of the country would be brought forth, and, instead of the vilest commerce that ever disgraced the character of man, an honest and luxuriant trade would spring up,

and in time we might reasonably hope to redeem so extensive a tract from its present state of barbarism. The means at present adopted to suppress the slave-trade can never succeed. Stronger measures are requisite; and the course most likely to prove effective would be to punish the native princes themselves who engage in it, by fines for the first or second offence, and afterwards with greater severity, according as their culpability should be deemed to deserve it. When humanity is the motive, scruples about attacking unenlightened and defenceless people should never be allowed to preponderate over a sense of justice; they must from their own feelings be aware that they are doing wrong, and therefore should be subjected to a correction which might impel them to change their conduct.

The palm-oil is obtained by barter for goods, four or five pounds' worth of which will procure a ton, that at Liverpool sometimes sells for twenty-eight pounds sterling; a profit that would be enormous, were it not for the many drawbacks, such as the delay of four or five months employed in obtaining a cargo, the wear and tear of the vessel, the wages of the master and crew, and the value of the presents exacted

by the king and one or more of the chiefs previously to the opening of the trade. Besides, from the unhealthy nature of the climate, the ships engaged in this trade are obliged to carry a medical gentleman and extra seamen, and, when arrived at the port, to hire natives to perform work which otherwise must be done by their own crew. All these items, added to the expense incurred by housing over the vessels, amount to a considerable sum.

The discipline maintained by the masters of these vessels does them great credit; for the men are prevented by it from indulging in those excesses which, in so unhealthy a climate, must inevitably prove fatal to them. Its pernicious effects are particularly felt by the crews of the slavers, who, during the ten months or upwards required to complete their complement of slaves, often lose three-fourths of their number, and instances have sometimes occurred where even all on board have perished. The surgeons, I should imagine, would not in general undertake a second voyage; but, should they be induced to do so, and to put up with the unworthy treatment which they experience—scarcely superior to that of the

seamen,—they may by chance, by turning their attention to trade and gaining a knowledge of it, obtain the command of one of the vessels employed in it. Two masters, out of the seven commanding the vessels when we were there, had been medical gentlemen.

This arrangement, however it may turn to the owner's account, is very unjust to the seafaring profession; inasmuch as it deprives them of the only reward attendant on long service and faithful discharge of duty.

The east point of the Bonny is situated in latitude 4° 23′ 42″ north, and longitude 7° 5′ 29″ east; and the broad expanse of water opened to the view on arriving off it is, like the entrance of the Cameroons, the common mouth of two rivers, that of Bonny to the east, and New Callabar in the opposite direction. The former is the more considerable of the two; yet they are both fine rivers, and can be entered at any time of the tide by vessels drawing from twelve to eighteen feet; the latter applying to the Bonny.

They are deep inside, and the anchorage in them safe at all times of the year. On account of the great commerce which the Bonny

enjoys, King Peppel, of Bonny Town, situated on the eastern bank of the river, where it discharges itself into the common mouth, possesses immense wealth. His native name is Ŏpŏpŏfō-bĕrăh: in his vanity he assumes various titles, of which Conqueror of Callabar is the most remarkable, and was derived from his grandfather, who subdued that country; which, however, has long been independent, though the present king threatens again to reduce it to subjection. This instance of vain pretension and pride in a Negro king savours much of a caricature on the same spirit displayed by various monarchs of Europe. Peppel, notwithstanding the large magazines which he has full of goods and specie, always affects to be poor; probably conceiving that, if his wealth were known, some potentate of superior strength would be induced to attack his possessions for the sake of plunder. The magazines are not in Bonny Town, but their exact situation is not known, excepting that of two or three of small size, which, for the sake of convenience, are erected at a village a little farther up the river, on the banks of a creek wherein the war canoes are kept. These canoes, sometimes

exceeding seventy feet in length, are armed with one or more guns of small calibre, and carry, when on a war expedition, upwards of eighty men, the greater number provided with muskets.

I have before stated that the Bonny people have a great dread of English men-of-war: they have always, since the abolition of the slave-trade, entertained the same feeling in a slight degree; but since they witnessed an instance of English prowess about three years ago, that impression has become much more profound. The circumstance to which I allude was the capture of several slavers off the town by the boats of the squadron. The information obtained by the latter appears to have been as correct as the arrangement of the attack was judicious.

The slavers, consisting of French and Spanish vessels of various sizes, with a portion of their cargo on board, were at anchor near the shore, as they imagined in perfect security, when suddenly, at the strongest of the flood-tide and sea-breeze, the boats of the squadron were observed opening round the point, pulling and sailing, with their colours flying. In an in-

stant an alarm was given, and all was activity and preparation on the part of the slavers for an obstinate resistance.

The largest was a Spanish schooner, full of men, and mounting several guns. She was considered as the commodore, and, in the pride of fancied strength, daily discharged a morning and evening gun. This vessel, with the rest, immediately commenced a heavy cannonade on the boats as they approached, and with effect; for, notwithstanding the short time which elapsed between their appearance and reaching the vessels, several of their men were wounded. They very properly forbore to return a shot, well knowing that they should soon have an opportunity of punishing the miscreants more effectually at close quarters. Peppel and his people, who were standing on shore and watching the scene, were amazed; they thought the English mad at least, especially when they observed but one boat board the large schooner on either bow, and the rest dash on to the others. The slavers were all carried in less than five minutes; but, as they had previously done so much damage, their cries for quarter were drowned, for the first

two or three minutes, by threats and cheers in a higher tone from the English, accompanied by corresponding actions.

The crew of the large schooner especially suffered; scarcely one remained on deck alive, and those who were not there cut down endeavoured to escape by jumping overboard and making for the shore; in which attempt many miserably perished by the sharks, which in great numbers infest the river. Those of the smaller vessels fared better, as the greater part, when the English drew near, took to their boats and escaped to the shore. The firing, the confusion, and the din in boarding the vessels; the cries of the wounded who reached the shore, and of those whom the sharks were mangling in the way, together with the oaths and exclamations of despair uttered by those whose property was involved,—produced the utmost consternation among the Blacks, and in a few minutes there was not one left in the town. They retreated panic-struck to the woods, whence it required some trouble on the part of the masters of the English merchant-vessels to prevail on them to return.

On the arrival now of a man-of-war near the

town, the "pull-away boys," for so the natives who work on board the vessels are termed, immediately desert them and hurry on shore. This was the case when we went up. The king, however, although much alarmed, endeavoured to keep up appearances by paying us from the commencement every attention, and by presenting us on our arrival with a calf, the more effectually to conciliate our good-will. Two boats, in one of which I was, proceeded about three miles above the town, and thence surveyed the river back. This proceeding greatly alarmed Peppel, and rendered him furious; nothing could appease him: he stopped the trade altogether, and when, in consequence, the masters of the vessels waited on him, they found him in the utmost agitation and dread as to the object of our ascending to a place to which, from jealousy, he never permitted the boats of traders to go; and he expressed the most vehement indignation at our daring to take such a liberty without even asking his permission — a circumstance which, together with Captain Vidal's not having yet been to see him, would, he affirmed, considerably lower him in the estimation of his subjects.

In this way he continued to expatiate to the masters of the vessels, accompanying his words by placing his fingers to his ears, as if determined not to hear a word in explanation of a circumstance that he deemed inexplicable. "Brudder George" (His Britannic Majesty) "send war-ship, look um what water bar ab got; dat good, me let um dat. Brudder send boat chop um slave-ship; dat good, me let um dat. E no send war-ship look um creek, where me keep um war-canoe. E no send war-ship, for cappen no peakee me, no lookee me face. No, no, no, no; me tell you no! Suppose you come all you mout full palaver give e reason why e do it, me tell you, 'you peakee lie, you peakee lie, you peakee d—n lie!' Suppose my fadder, my fadder's fadder (grandfather), come up from ground and peakee me why English do dat, I no sabbee tell um why." In this strain of oratory the old man went on, until, from rage and exhaustion, he could say no more.

At the time this affair occurred, the brig had not proceeded so high as the town; it was of course intended to postpone any visit to Peppel till the vessel should move up, as the nature of the service in which we were employed,

together with the scantiness of provision, rendered it inconvenient to Captain Vidal to absent himself from the brig longer than could be avoided. An officer had, however, been sent, by way of compliment, to state the errand on which we came; and, no objection having been made, that was considered sufficient for the present. The survey was prosecuted with that despatch which the short time we had to spare required, and we had not the most distant idea that any of our proceedings could be deemed an insult to Peppel. When, however, Captain Vidal received a letter from the masters of the English vessels, stating that the king had suspended their trade on that account, he deviated from his original intention, and proceeded to King Peppel, with whom the misunderstanding was soon cleared up, and the oil-trade again opened.

Peppel, although he dresses meanly, yet has a very high notion of his rank and power, and appears, from what I have heard, to be strongly disposed to presume upon it; in fact, were he not naturally vain, the deference and respect which are paid to him, and the manner in which he is courted by the different traders, in

the emulation of commerce, would be amply sufficient to render him arrogant. His caprices and whims are submitted to, and consequently increase, instead of being checked by a display of independent feeling, which, conscious that the gain by the trade is mutual, and that the natives could not well do without it, would oppose threat to the threat of stopping it. His anger, as in the case above recited, produced the utmost alarm, and a stranger listening to the consultation respecting it among the English masters of merchantmen would be apt to imagine himself in the vicinity of St. James's, rather than at the town of a Negro prince.

For the entertainment of casual visiters, a table is generally placed at the door of Peppel's abode, and covered with liqueurs, &c. The king likewise at times gives a grand dinner, to which the masters of vessels and his chiefs are invited. The display on these occasions is very grand; the table-service, as well as the wines, liqueurs, and eatables, are of the best kinds. At an entertainment given a short time before our arrival, Peppel, after he had eaten most immoderately for nearly half an hour, turned round to his domestics, who were loading the

table with dishes, and angrily exclaimed, "Why you mak many ting stand for table one time? Dat makee me sick; appetite no come up."

Excepting in one or two places, the vicinity of the rivers Bonny and New Callabar is low and swampy, especially where the town is built, on the left point of a narrow and deep creek, which communicates with the river Andony, fifteen miles to the eastward. There, such is the marshy nature of the ground, that pools of stagnant water occur at very short distances, rendered putrid by the effects of the sun and the filth which they contain. Doubtless they contribute much to the unhealthiness of the place, especially during the dry weather which prevails from September to June, when the inhabitants die in great numbers, under the combined effects of dysentery and jungle fever; whereas the vessels suffer the least during that time, the rains principally proving prejudicial to them. The huts in Bonny Town vary much in quality, size, and style of building; in shape they resemble the English cottage. They are very dirty, and are constructed in great part of stakes, plastered with mud, the roof being made of the leaves of the palm. The dwelling

of the king is scarcely superior to the rest, although it is adorned inside with a profusion of looking-glasses, crowded together in a tasteless gaudy display.

The superstitions of the Bonny people are very extraordinary. Whatever animal or other thing they consider sacred, they term a jewjew. The most common, and apparently the principal, of these jewjews is the guana *(Lacerta guana)*, a reptile which, in their country, attains a very large size. Several which I saw exceeded three feet and a half in length, and in their appearance were particularly disgusting, being of an unvaried dirty tawny hue. Those which live in the towns are very tame, and several, as I passed through the narrow alleys, approached and amused themselves in licking the blacking from my shoes. The masses of filth, scraped and deposited in corners, appeared to be their favourite haunts when no pools were near. There they were observed watching the flies carousing, and darting at them their long slender tongues with extraordinary quickness and dexterity. For these, as well as snakes, which are likewise jewjews, small spaces are enclosed, and diminutive huts

erected, in various parts near the sea and in the interior of the country. To kill either is considered by the natives as a capital offence, and punished with death; yet towards Whites so offending, they do not resort to such severe measures, but merely content themselves with strongly censuring them for their profane conduct. When, however, a very flagrant instance occurs, and the White man is not individually known by those of the natives witnessing the act, it is likely that in the first transport of their anger he may be made to atone for his offence with his life; for though the Whites themselves are termed jewjews, this in all probability is merely a nominal title conferred as a compliment.

The king, though often invited, will never venture on board a man-of-war, but sometimes visits the merchant-vessels, proceeding from the shore in a war-canoe in great form; but, as he approaches, he always keeps aloof till the compliment of a heavy salute is paid him. He then goes close to the ship's side, and breaks a new-laid hen's egg against it, after which he ascends the deck, fully persuaded that by the performance of this ceremony he has fortified

himself against any act of treachery. For other reasons, or perhaps none that he can explain, he likewise takes with him a number of feathers, and his father's arm-bone, which, on sitting down to dinner, he places on the table beside his plate. He also has at the same time a young chicken dangling by one leg (the other being cut off) from his neck.

The bar of the river Bonny has sometimes proved fatal to vessels resorting thither; and, being therefore injurious to the trade of the place, the inhabitants, considering it as an evil deity, endeavour to conciliate its good-will by sacrificing at times a human victim upon it. The last ceremony of this sort took place not a very long time before our arrival. The handsomest and finest lad that could be procured was chosen for the purpose, and for several months before the period fixed for the close of his existence he was lodged with the king, who, on account of his mild demeanour and pleasing qualities, soon entertained a great affection for him; yet, swayed by superstitious fanaticism, he made no attempt to save him; but, on the contrary, regarded the fate to which the unfortunate lad was destined as the greatest honour

that could be conferred upon him. From the time that he was chosen to propitiate by his death the forbearance of the bar, he was considered as a sacred person; whatever he touched, even while casually passing along, was thenceforth his; and therefore, when he appeared abroad, the inhabitants fled before him, to save the apparel which they had on, or any articles which at the time they might be carrying. Unconscious, as it is affirmed, of the fate intended for him, he was conveyed in a large canoe to the bar, and there persuaded to jump overboard to bathe, while those who took him out immediately turned their backs upon him, and paddled away with the utmost haste, heedless of the cries of the wretched victim, at whom, pursuant to their stern superstition, not even a look was allowed to be cast back.

When so horrid a practice as that of human sacrifice prevails in a country, it takes off much of the barbarity of the action when a culprit is chosen for the victim, as at the river of New Callabar, where those who are adjudged to die for capital offences are cast into the water to be devoured by the sharks, the principal jew-jews of the country.

The provisions which we managed to obtain amounted altogether to about three weeks' supply. This, although scanty, was sufficient, together with the Fernando Po yams, which we served out in lieu of half the daily allowance of bread, to enable us to remain a short time longer on the coast in the prosecution of our survey. It also allowed us to expend more time than we otherwise could possibly have spared in examining the rivers Bonny and New Callabar, together with their entrances, which, from their relative trade to that of other places that we had visited, were most deserving of being critically explored, at least as far up as vessels are in the habit of going. In proceeding outside, on the 24th of March, to complete the examination of the bar, we were set by the rapidity of the tide so near to the east point as to be obliged, in order to avoid being cast upon it, to let go an anchor in very shoal water, and at less than our length from the shore. As the place was perfectly sheltered by a shoal awash immediately outside, the only danger we should have incurred by taking the ground would have been that of falling to seaward as the tide left us; a circumstance which, on ac-

count of the steep descent to deep water, might have been attended with bad consequences.

We sailed from the Bonny on the 28th March 1826, having three days before boarded an English merchantman from Liverpool, and gained the pleasing intelligence of the promotion of Captain Vidal to the rank of Post Captain, in October last, and that of Lieutenant William Mudge, first of the Leven, to that of Commander. It showed us that the toilsome service we had been engaged in, and the completion of its object as far as regarded the portion eastward of the Cape, had been duly appreciated at home; a consideration highly gratifying to the feelings of those in the two vessels who had assisted in it.

After leaving the Bonny, we made the best of our way to the westward, beating up against the light winds which prevailed from that quarter till we had doubled Cape Formoso, and then, having surveyed the coast along the river Formoso, in the Bight of Benin, the northern boundary, as before mentioned, of the portion of the West coast of Africa assigned for us to survey, we anchored off it on the evening of the 2nd of April 1826.

CHAPTER XIV.

Remarks on the River Formoso.—Old Callabar and Del Rey.—Fish Stakes.—Observations respecting the Coast.—Description of the Cameroons and other Mountains.—Arrival at Fernando Po.—Internal Arrangements.—Military Order.—Narrow Escape of the principal Chief from Drowning.—Fowls at Ten a Penny.—Description of Fernando Po.—Cultivation of the Island.—The Vessel sails for Sierra Leone.—Bad Passage.—Tornado.—Arrival at Sierra Leone.—Annoyance from Rats and Cockroaches.

THE river Formoso, or, as it is often termed, Benin, is situated in latitude 5° 40′ north, and longitude 5° 2′ east. During the time of the slave-trade it was much resorted to; but now it has, comparatively speaking, little commerce, owing, as I should imagine, to the following causes:—When the slave-trade prevailed, the English, who certainly commanded the market,*

* A chief at the Congo, when lamenting the little trade which it then had, said, that during the time of the slave-trade, he had often counted there upwards of thirty English

and whose vessels far outnumbered those of other nations, were in the habit, from that praiseworthy emulation which they have ever manifested, of searching out every spot, however insignificant or difficult of access, in which they might carry on their trade. Thus it was that the Formoso, as well as the numerous other rivers between it and Bonny, was resorted to by shipping; although, from their generally inconsiderable size and shallow bar, they are accessible only to vessels of small burden, and in one or two instances only to boats. Along that coast the palm-oil trade is now the principal branch of commerce in which the English engage; yet, as the commodity is to be obtained cheaper in the end by dealing in large vessels alone with the more considerable ports, such as the Bonny, Old Callabar, and Cameroons, the Formoso and other rivers of minor consequence are nearly deserted; as we discovered, even when casually passing two or three, from which the natives came off, and earnestly requested us to inform

vessels employed in that traffic. He might be incorrect in regard to the number; yet, as his observation was corroborated by others present, it showed, at least, that the English interest prevailed.

all palm-oil traders that their jars and calabashes were running over with the article for want of vessels to take it away.

This decline of trade was severely felt by the people of the Formoso, and a book which lies before me states, that "Fish Town, situated near the entrance of the river, was, in March 1818, expressly burned, being represented to the king by his fetiche-men, or necromancers, as a necessary step to appease the deity who had deprived them of trade so long. In consequence, the inhabitants received an immediate mandate to seek some other abode; and it was sacrificed in solemn pomp, together with a boy and bullock, whose blood was strewed across the river by the principal chiefs, followed in a splendid procession by all the natives in their war-canoes, and the females, dressed in white, uttering cries and songs, appropriate to the occasion."

The river Formoso is only a mile and three-quarters broad, and is crossed by a bar, on which there is but twelve feet at low water. This is quite exposed, and therefore, during bad weather, it is very dangerous, on account of the heavy surf that rolls in upon it. The natives, with reason, regard it as their greatest enemy,

and, as I have been informed, often sacrifice human victims upon it, in order to propitiate its forbearance. When conversing on this subject, they interlard their remarks with invectives, and abuse the bar in their broken English; as, "Big rogue; why for stand there make bob? no let ship come in." Booby Town, at the south entrance, together with another on the opposite side, and the neighbouring villages, are under the direction of a governor, appointed by the King of Benin, and approved by the sovereign of Warree, whose supremacy extends over all, and who, by way of distinction, is termed by the natives the Great King. Two of our boats, which were employed sounding inside the bar, were detained there nearly two days by bad weather. They visited the governor, who received them with hospitality, and made them a present of a pig. He had a great quantity of palm-oil on hand, as well as a small store full of ivory and Jaboo cloths, from the finest quality to the most ordinary sort.

On the 5th of April 1826 we quitted Formoso, and resumed our survey at the Cape, and continued it to Old Callabar river, where we arrived on the 13th. This is the most consi-

derable river included in our survey: like that of the Cameroons, it commences with a large expanse of water, into which various rivers or creeks empty themselves. It is nine miles across, and its east point is situated in latitude 4° 23′ 42″ north, and longitude 7° 5′ 29″ east. Notwithstanding its great breadth, the discharge of water is sufficient to scoop out three or four channels adapted for the largest vessels. Pressed as we were for time, we were obliged to confine our examination to the dangers of the bar, and the land-features of the river for a short distance up: in fact, to do credit in a hydrographical sense to so extensive a river, it would require a single vessel to be employed there at least eight weeks; for even the place to which the traders ascend is accounted to be upwards of seventy miles from the entrance. We had no communication with the natives, who were observed, however, in great numbers every morning, plying in their canoes about the rivers. Our operations no doubt appeared to them highly suspicious; as they never would approach, and carefully avoided our boats.

We quitted Old Callabar river for that of Del Rey on the 16th. The intermediate por-

tion of coast is but twelve miles in extent. Like the rest of the land in the vicinity of the river, it is low and apparently swampy, and is bisected about half-way by a small river named Backossey Gap. This was examined by Mr. Rogier, who had the command of two boats for that purpose. He entered it, and landed at a village, which the inhabitants, as he approached, deserted in the greatest alarm, leaving even their arms behind them in their hurry to escape. Their huts resembled others along the coast; but the manner in which they disposed of their dead was totally different from what we had ever hitherto observed. The corpse was not interred, but placed under a shed, at full length and slightly raised above the ground, with a plate or bowl of rice and other grain near its head.

The river Del Rey is represented in the charts as being of considerable magnitude. It appears so in the approach, but is in reality an open shallow bay, with several large creeks running into it, and one river, which, although it is four miles and a half in breadth at the entrance, soon narrows considerably, and has but a confined channel, in crossing which, two miles up, I obtained no greater depth than three fathoms,

and a still less prevails outside. The bay is limited on the eastern side by the lofty mountains of Cameroons. The shores abound in every part with inhabitants, who, I should imagine, subsist mostly on fish; for, while employed in tracing out the land-features of the river's mouth and that of the bay, I could sometimes count as many as forty canoes depositing at daylight their fish-baskets at staked enclosures, and returning for them in the evening. These enclosures differed very much from any that we had ever seen before, being carried out to a depth of three fathoms, and extending in length sometimes upwards of a mile. They were not interwoven hedge-fashion, to keep the fish from passing without; as, on account of the small rise and fall of the tide, the enclosed space would never be left dry to take them. It afterwards appeared that the stakes were only driven in for the purpose of fastening the nets and fish-baskets to them; as latterly we observed several of the canoes engaged in that operation.

The villages were large, and not, like those to the southward, hidden from view; probably on account of the bay being less frequented for

slaves, and the feeling of security among the inhabitants arising from their numbers. On two different occasions, two canoes, full of men, with a chief seated in each, came off; but, as they approached, the people became frightened, and, after lying off some time on their paddles, returned to the shore.

Before I proceed, I shall pass a few remarks on the coast between the river Formoso and Old Callabar. The land, with the exception of the immediate vicinity of the Bonny, where it is slightly elevated in one or two places, exhibits a uniform low flat, unbroken by the slightest rise in the most distant view. It abounds in rivers; between the Formoso and the Cape of that name, a distance of one hundred and sixteen miles, there are eleven, the most considerable of which is the Warree, and the rest generally have the appearance of being accessible to vessels of a small draught of water. To the eastward of the Cape, between that and Bonny (fifty-one miles), are six more, in two of which we actually saw vessels at anchor; and farther on, towards Old Callabar, is the Andony; which with another, having two entrances and three

creeks, makes the rivers and creeks in a line of coast two hundred and forty miles in extent amount to twenty-four.

As the land, by the projection of Cape Formoso, forms, as it were, the segment of a circle, it is impossible that the numerous rivers along it can run parallel to one another, and thereby avoid a junction. We know to a certainty that the river Formoso is connected with the Warree, and, according to the report of the natives, with New Callabar also; consequently, the intervening rivers must branch off from or pass through that line of communication, for they are all of a size which indicates that they flow from some considerable distance before they reach the sea. The Bonny also communicates with the river Andony; a fact proved by the boats of His Majesty's ship Myrmidon, which passed from one to the other. What inference are we to draw from these circumstances? Are we to suppose that these numerous rivers are but the mouths of an immense stream in the interior (the Niger, for instance); or that they are merely the drains of the extensive marshy flat included in the limits that I have mentioned? The rapidity of the tide in them is

great, and we know that in the Bonny the duration of the ebb exceeds that of the flood; yet the water in them, even at the lowest tide, as high up as we proceeded (three miles) in the Bonny, New Callabar, and Formoso, was only brackish. We were however informed that, at some distance farther, it was quite fresh. Were it perfectly salt, we should have no hesitation in affirming that it was but the draining of a marsh flooded by the sea; but when we find that at some distance up it becomes fresh, we may equally presume that it flows from an internal river, against the fresh current of which, in so extensive a flat, the salt water of the sea-tide is enabled to prevail for a considerable distance, the rapidity of the inland fresh supply being checked by the numerous channels among which it is divided, and the low lands through which they pass. If these rivers actually proceed from the low lands flooded by the sea or rains, and not from a large internal river, is it likely that they would be so numerous, so considerable, so rapid, or so deep as they are? Would not the same number of inconsiderable creeks be amply sufficient for the purpose?

It is to be regretted that in regard to this

subject, as well as many more equally interesting, the nature of the service in which we were employed prevented our attaining such information as might lead to a satisfactory result. We had not time. We were not, like a vessel on discovery, employed to make observations on the country, the manners and customs of the natives, &c.: our object was strictly hydrographical, and in the prosecution of it little opportunity was afforded for other pursuits.

When we were last employed on this part of the coast, the harmattan haze, as I have already stated, enveloped and hid from our view the stupendous highland scenery; but it was no longer concealed by this veil. It gradually became unfolded to our view, and we approached its many peaks, all at times being equally discernible, notwithstanding their great distance from each other and from us. Of these the Mountain of Cameroons appears to be the most lofty. It is an immense mass, its base being more than twenty miles in diameter, and rising to the height of 13,250 feet above the level of the sea. It is covered with verdure and trees of luxuriant growth, excepting in the vicinity of its rounded summit, and in

one part of the eastern side, where a narrow, well-defined streak, apparently of parched herbage alone, takes a direction towards the sea, and resembles, at a little distance, a current of lava that has for some time ceased to flow. Near the lower termination of this stripe, and close to the water, the sharp-peaked height of the Little Cameroons elevates itself 6000 feet. Although many hills and steep heights rise from the sides of the Mountain of Cameroons, they are, comparatively speaking, so inconsiderable that they scarcely break in upon the uniformity of the gradual ascent. The Rumby range, however, forms an exception: it is composed of a series of lofty peaks and rugged mountainous masses, all evidently of great height, for we could plainly discern them at the distance of sixty miles.

The highest of them bears north 10° east, forty-four miles from the peak of the Cameroons. The intervening space consists of a plain, from whose surface abruptly rise several conical hills, communicating to the whole a very extraordinary appearance. Qua mountain is also a stupendous mass, and, I should imagine, approaches nearer in height to the Cameroons

than any of the rest: it bears from it north 16° 15′ west, sixty-four miles, and was discernible at the distance of nearly eighty. Had the weather continued clear, I have no doubt that we should have seen it with ease even when much farther off. All these mountains are probably volcanic, for that of the Cameroons certainly is, as well as the whole of the island of Fernando Po.

The sea-boundary often consists of low cliffs, perforated with caverns, having in many instances a very extraordinary appearance. In one place, two of the largest size, and situated a great distance apart, communicated with each other by means of an extensive gallery, pierced from without by a line of holes at equal distances, resembling, to the greatest nicety, an excavated fort.

On the 20th of April we left the river Del Rey, and next morning took up our former anchorage at Fernando Po. The boats were immediately sent on shore for water, and the same arrangements made for their protection as on our former visit. The natives appeared highly delighted to see them again, and recognised with the most cordial greetings such of the

people whom they remembered. Soon afterwards they ventured off in their canoes, and flocked on board in great numbers, selling not only yams as before, but goats and fowls, in return for pieces of iron hoop. It certainly would sound to many very much like a traveller's story, yet it is an absolute fact, that by this mode of traffic we obtained our fowls at the rate of ten for a penny. The price of the hoop, for example, was one shilling; it was cut up into thirty pieces, and each of these was equivalent to four fowls.

The farther insight into the character of the Fernando Po people, gained in this second visit to their island, tended to show that, however barbarous they appear at first sight to strangers, yet among themselves they have very salutary regulations, not less apparent in their civil government than in a military point of view. In illustration of this point I shall give three examples:—In the first place, theft, as I have already related, is punished with remarkable severity. Secondly, the people, great as was their number, and anxious as they were to trade, yet paid such strict obedience to the principal chief among them, that, until he had

given permission, not one approached the boats, or brought for barter any other article than was allowed: thus, at our first visit, yams alone were to be seen; whence it might be inferred that an embargo was laid on the scarcer necessaries of life, until those of minor importance were found inadequate to effect a trade in the article which they stood in need of. And thirdly, although the natives generally, in order not to disturb the good understanding between us, deposited their weapons in the bushes before they approached, yet such was the military discipline observed, that, in an instant, on a signal given by the chiefs, each individual not only resumed his arms, but repaired to a station evidently assigned to him by previous concert, as we discovered in the following instance:—

Two of the principal and most active of the chiefs were prevailed upon to visit us on board, where they received presents and were kindly entertained. Their countrymen were manifestly anxious for their return; and, when they saw them approaching in our boats, they ran to the bushes for their spears, and, by the time the two chiefs had landed, were marshalled in warlike array to receive them. They were in

close rank and file, and formed into separate squares; and, as the chiefs bent their steps towards the principal one, with such presents as were expressly sent to him, they paraded around and around them, flourishing their arms and singing in concert. Such prompt and martial discipline proves that the island is not under one government, but in a state of continual warfare; for, in savage life, especially on a large island, defensive measures would soon be neglected unless the necessity for them were kept up by internal feuds.

The two chiefs who visited us appeared very anxious to obtain presents of iron hoop, and, when petitioning to that effect, fell on their knees before the person whom they were addressing. Whether this action was taught them by the Whites when they possessed the island, it is impossible to say: it certainly was far from pleasing to Englishmen.

The yams which we obtained when we were last at this island proved to be excellent, and served us till within a short time of our return, a period of six weeks; but those that they now brought down, although apparently in the same good condition, went rapidly to decay; a dif-

ference that was probably occasioned either by their having been the residue of those first procured, and consequently remaining above ground ever since, or from the increased moisture of the earth, occasioned by the partial rains that precede the wet season, which was just about to set in.

The longer we stopped, the less timid the natives became; and latterly, in one or two instances, they did not retreat to their canoes and shove off from the brig when they perceived our boats returning from the shore, as they had at first invariably done, even when a single one approached. At last, the principal chief himself, pleased with the presents and attentions which he had received, determined to pay us a visit, and accordingly entered for that purpose one of our boats, which was just shoving off. The natives, who from the first appeared to disapprove his intention, when they perceived that he was fairly embarked and the boat plying her oars, became so importunate and clamorous for his return, that, although he himself evinced no token of fear, he acceded to their wishes and leaped overboard to rejoin them. He was out of his depth, and could not

swim; and, had not a marine, named Joseph Wheeler, immediately jumped after him and held up his head till assistance was procured, he must inevitably have been drowned. Not that the natives were backward in attempting to save him; for even the little girls, uttering screams of affright, rushed in and swam to his rescue. Their efforts, however, would have been fruitless; for he was just saved from sinking long before they reached the spot. The gratitude which the natives evinced towards the marine did them infinite credit: they surrounded him in numbers, and vied with each other in forcing upon him such presents as they conceived to be most agreeable. The behaviour of the chief throughout this affair commanded the respect of all who witnessed it. Although he must have been well aware of his danger, he never uttered a cry; and was ready, when landed, to meet with a smile the many tokens of respect and affection which his people lavished upon him. The only inconvenience that he appeared to have suffered arose from the quantity of salt water which he had swallowed: this he endeavoured to remove by such repeated draughts of toddy as would

in any of us have occasioned immediate intoxication. It is worthy of remark, that this liquor, if kept an hour or two, especially in the sun, ferments and attains a most intoxicating strength; as was experienced by our seamen, in one instance, at Mombas, in October 1824; but, of course, good care was taken afterwards to guard against its effects.

During our first visit, when the trade was not so brisk as the natives wished, they stopped with large stones the course of the fresh water that supplied us. This, however, on our return they never attempted to do; but, as soon as they perceived that we began to get tired of the yams, they brought down fowls and goats, and latterly curious animals, of which two were very remarkable; one of the *Lacerta* genus, twenty inches long, and covered with scales of a peculiar form; and the other resembling a badger in size, colour, and shape, but differing in the paws, which were precisely like those of the monkey. Animals of this latter species abound in the woods; but all that we saw were alike, as were also the skins which the natives brought off to sell. They were of a large kind, and perfectly black, with long slender tails.

As Captain Vidal wished, before we sailed for Sierra Leone, to rate the chronometers afresh, he determined, during the intermediate days between the observations requisite for that purpose, to make the circuit of the island. Accordingly, we sailed on the 25th, expecting to be about three days absent; but, on account of the lightness of the airs to the westward, were detained two more. We found the shape and size of Fernando Po to differ considerably from that given in the charts. It lies north-east by north, and south-west by south; and is forty-two miles long and nineteen broad, being an oblong square with the corners rounded off. Towards its north-east extremity, the loftiest of its three peaks lifts its stupendous summit to the height of 10,200 feet above the level of the sea. Its sides present a far more rugged appearance than that of the Cameroons, being intersected by ravines of gloomy depth, and precipices of so stupendous a nature, as evidently to demonstrate that the whole mass must have originated in some subterranean agency of the most powerful kind.

The two smaller peaks are situated towards the opposite extremity of the island, and are,

comparatively, of inconsiderable height. They are covered, even to the summit, by forests of the richest growth and cultivated tracts of the liveliest green, affording a manifest proof of the excellence of the soil, the industry of the natives, and their skill as agriculturists; for the fields were furrowed with as much care and regularity as those in civilized countries, instead of exhibiting the slovenly system pursued by the generality of the savages, who strew the grain on the earth in so careless a manner as to render it difficult to decide whether the crop is the effect of cultivation or of chance. The rest of the island is equally covered with forest, excepting towards the summit of the loftiest peak, where is a barren tract of a parched and reddish cast. This peak bears north 33° east, forty-five miles from that of Cameroons, and is thirteen and a half from the north-east end of the island; the channel between which and the main is nineteen miles across, and has thirty-nine fathoms in the deepest part, the shore on either side being accessible, with a great depth of water close to. To the southward and eastward of the island, no soundings can be obtained till within a very short dis-

tance of the rocks; but in crossing from it in a direct line to the Andony, the greatest depth we found was fifty-two fathoms, the shoal water from the main in that part extending to a great distance.

On returning to our bay, a few hours sufficed to obtain the observations requisite for rating the chronometers; after which, on the 30th of April, we weighed for Sierra Leone. Never in the course of my service at sea did I experience so tedious and disagreeable a voyage. In vain we attempted for a long time to get to the southward, in order to profit by the favourable winds that prevail in the vicinity of the Line, as our efforts were combated by a current which always tended to sweep us back into the Bight of Benin; besides, though we were on half allowance, our provision became so reduced that we were on the point of bearing up for Cape Coast Castle, in quest of more, when, fortunately, the light airs which, varied by calms, had hitherto prevailed, freshened up into a breeze, that enabled us at last to get into the fair way for Sierra Leone. We also partly escaped the tornadoes which, accompanied by heavy showers, had so long haunted us, but not

entirely; for, on the night of the 13th of May, we were in an instant reduced by one to a complete wreck. Our mizen-mast went by the board, the main-top mast and fore-top gallant went over the side, and the fore-top mast was badly sprung; besides, one quarter-boat, an old and faithful servant, which we brought out from England with us, was knocked to pieces, and another severely damaged.

We arrived, on the 4th of June, with only four days' provision left, at Sierra Leone, where our consort the Leven was at anchor. Joined as we had been in an undertaking of nearly five years' continuance, our meeting was hailed by the old hands on board of her in a manner that did credit to their feelings: they rushed in a crowd to the rigging, and welcomed us with three hearty cheers, which of course we were not backward in returning. When fitting out together, the gun-room officers formed but one mess, the midshipmen another, and the two ships' companies became personally known to each other by occupying in the hulk the opposite sides of the same deck. Afterwards, the midshipmen served alternately in both vessels; the gun-room officers were shifted as fatalities occurred

and rendered it expedient, and so indeed were many of the foremast-men. This wise policy of Captain Owen's contributed greatly to the furtherance of the service, when the two vessels were jointly employed in the same part. It likewise rendered our meeting always agreeable: for, if the society of strangers becomes a great treat, how much more gratifying must it be to meet those whom we know, and who have lived in company with us—embarked, too, in the same undertaking, and suffering the same hardships and privations as ourselves!

Independently of the tediousness of our last passage, we had become more than ever annoyed by rats and cockroaches. The former, unable to pick up any refuse of eatables about the deck, attacked the small stock of provisions which we had below and made great havoc, besides running over us at night and keeping up a great noise about the decks. The cockroaches resorted in myriads to the bread-room, where that which they did not eat they rendered so filthy that we could scarcely touch it. Indeed, their ravages were so unlimited that scarcely anything escaped them. They destroyed our books and clothes, and even attacked

us while asleep so ravenously that many of us were latterly obliged to wear gloves, their bites proving very painful, as they sometimes gnawed the skin off for nearly a quarter of an inch square. It is an extraordinary fact, that they preferred eating even the leaves of the old books in preference to those of the new: if they showed a greater relish for the binding of the former, it may be accounted for on the supposition that from its age the leather had become soiled, and thus afforded more nourishment than the latter. The binding of the foreign books they likewise preferred to English. An inquiry into the difference of the process, and the materials employed in the curing of the hide, might probably lead to the discovery of the substance that acts as an antidote against the ravages of such destructive insects. They were excessively fond of Indian ink; and, after eating through the corks—for they were no bar to them, unless when covered with rosin—they ventured on our medicines, and took a large dose of arsenical powder, apparently with great appetite, and without feeling, as far as we could discover, any bad effects from it.

Thus far Lieutenant Boteler proceeded in his narrative; and, the laborious survey in which he had been engaged being finished, there is little to add, but that the Leven and the Barracouta remained as short a time as possible at Sierra Leone, whence they sailed for England on the 13th of June, and arrived at Spithead on the 23d of August 1826. Such were the sufferings occasioned by hardships, privations, and the deadly effects of the climate, that, in the course of the survey, which lasted four years and six months, only thirteen officers returned out of forty-four who left England, twenty-two having died, and nine having been obliged to be invalided, as is shown in the following lists.

LEVEN'S OFFICERS ON LEAVING ENGLAND.

Captain W. F. W. Owen.		
,, C. Lechmere	Passenger	Died, Delagoa, Nov. 9, 1822.
Lieut. A. T. E. Vidal . . .		Promoted { Commander / Post Captain } Oct. 4, 1825.
,, T. Botcler		Discharged to the Barracouta.
,, R. Owen		Ditto ditto.
Mr. Morley . .	Master .	Died, Delagoa, Dec. 5, 1822.
,, Alick Osborne	Surgeon .	Invalided, Cape.
,, T. Farley .	Purser .	Died, Cape, Oct. 1825.
,, H. A. Gibbons	Midshipman	Died, Delagoa, Nov. 26, 1822.
,, G. Daniel .	Ditto	Promoted Lieutenant, May 15, 1823.
,, C. W. Browne	Ditto .	Died, Senna, 1823.
,, — Henderson	Ditto .	Died, Delagoa, March 8, 1823.
,, W. B. Tambs	Ditto .	Died, Delagoa, Oct. 24. 1822.
,, O. Fisher .	Ditto .	Died at sea, April 28, 1824.
,, C. Robinson	Ditto .	Discharged to the Barracouta.
,, J. W. Watkins	Ditto .	Died at sea, 1822.
,, — Duncan .	Ditto .	Discharged to the Barracouta.
,, — Joyce .	Ditto .	Died, Delagoa, Feb. 4, 1823.
,, J. Cannon .	Ditto.	
,, A. F. Bowen	Ditto.	
,, S. Mercer .	Ditto.	
,, E. O. Tudor	Ditto .	Died, St. Jago, 1826.
,, T. Conolly .	Assist. Surgeon	Died, Delagoa, Jan. 22, 1823.
,, — De Meillor	2nd Master	Discharged, Cape, 1823.
,, J. Forbes .	Botanist .	Died, River Zambesi, 1823.
,, J. Favel .	Adm. Clerk	Died, Cape, 1823.
,, C. Owen .	Clerk.	
,, F. Ewing .	Gunner .	Died at sea, Feb. 16, 1824.
,, J. Manning .	Boatswain .	Invalided, Rio Janeiro, 1822.
,, J. Timpson .	Carpenter .	Died, Delagoa, Nov. 21, 1822.

OFFICERS WHO JOINED SINCE LEAVING ENGLAND.

Lieut.	R. Nash		Died, Cape, 1825.
,,	— Wilson		Invalided, Cape, 1825.
,,	G. W. Rabett		Invalided, Sierra Leone, 1826.
,,	Wm. Murray		Invalided, Cape, 1825.
Mr.	E. Rogier	Midshipman	Discharged to the Barracouta, Sept. 1826.
,,	J. Weir	Ditto	Discharged, Cape, 1825.
,,	— Barette	Ditto	Died, Sierra Leone, 1826.
,,	Z. Mudge	Ditto	Promoted Lieutenant, 1825.
,,	— Gordon	Ditto.	
,,	— Seward	Ditto	Discharged, Cape, 1825.
,,	H. Bowie	Ditto	Murdered, Madagascar, May 27, 1824.
,;	— Everest	Ditto	Invalided, Sierra Leone, 1826.
,,	— Dick	Ditto	Discharged to the Barracouta.
,,	— Phillips	Interpreter	Died, Mombas.
,,	— Savery	Clerk	Discharged to the Barracouta.
,,	———	Ditto.	
,,	J. Oldhall	Boatswain.	
,,	— Streater	Ditto	Invalided, 1823.
,,	— Pearson	Ditto	Invalided, Mauritius, 1824.
,,	J. Potts	Ditto	Discharged to the Barracouta.

BARRACOUTA'S OFFICERS ON LEAVING ENGLAND.

Capt.	W. Cutfield		Died, Delagoa, Nov. 30, 1822.
Lieut.	W. Mudge		Promoted Commander, Oct., 1826.
,,	J. J. Reitz		Died off Mombas, May 1824.
Mr.	A. F. Morgan	Master	Discharged to the Leven.
,,	D. Jamieson	Surgeon	Discharged to the Leven.
,,	G. Maber	Purser	Invalided, Cape, 1823.
,,	J. Buchanan	Assist. Surgeon	Invalided, Cape, 1822.

Mr. G. Hood	Midshipman	.	Died, Delagoa.
,, W. Arlette	Ditto	.	Promoted Lieutenant, 1825.
,, E. O. Johnes	Ditto	.	Promoted Lieutenant.
,, E. P. Durnford	Ditto	.	Died at sea, May 14, 1824.
,, W. Williams	Ditto	.	Died, Seychelles, Jan. 6, 1825.
,, J. Badgelley	Ditto	.	Discharged, Acting Lieut. Leven.
,, B. Foott	Ditto	.	Invalided, Mauritius.
,, J. P. L. Parsons	Ditto	.	Murdered, Madagascar, May 27, 1824.
,, N. S. Knott	Ditto.		
,, G. Blackley	Gunner	.	Invalided, Cape, 1823.
,, J. Steele	Boatswain	.	Died at sea, 1822.
,, J. Cooper	Carpenter	.	Died at sea, Feb. 7, 1824.

OFFICERS WHO JOINED SINCE LEAVING ENGLAND.

Mr. R. Beecroft	Master.		
,, W. Guland	Surgeon.		
,, J. G. Galler	Purser	.	Discharged to the Leven.
,, R. Martin	Assist. Surgeon		Discharged.
,, — Kilpatrick	Ditto	.	Died, Chapongah, 1823.
,, D. Jardine	Ditto	.	Invalided, Mauritius, 1825.
,, R. M. Cay	Ditto		
,, H. Cutfield	Midshipman.		
,, B. Dyer	Purser.		
,, J. Wheatley	Boatswain	.	Discharged to the Leven.
,, J. Vesey	Gunner	.	Discharged to the Leven.
,, R. Ratcliffe	Ditto	.	Discharged to the Leven.
,, E. Davis	Ditto		
,, J. Dick	Clerk	.	Discharged to the Leven.
,, E. Jenkins	Boatswain	.	Superseded.

THE END.

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